A CLEAR

DISPLAY

OF THE

TRINITY,

FROM

DIVINE REVELATION.

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WITH

An impartial Examination of ſome Traditions concerning GOD, in Syſtems contrived by Councils, Aſſemblies, and Synods, and impoſed upon Mankind as Articles of Faith.

IN THREE PARTS.

I. The Divine Character of a Plurality in Deity proved.
II. The oeconomical Character of *Father*, *Son*, and *HolyGhoſt*, illuſtrated.
III. The Scholaſtic Doctrine of the Trinity examined.

To which is added, by Way of Preface,

An ADDRESS to Enquiring CHRISTIANS.

The whole written in an eaſy and familiar Manner.

By A. M. A LAYMAN.

Hear, O Iſrael, JEHOVAH, *our* ELOHIM, *is one* JEHOVAH. Deut. vi. 4.—*Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that* JESUS *is the* SON OF GOD, *God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* 1 John iv. 15.—*Whether it be right in the Sight of God, to hearken unto* MEN *more than unto* GOD, *judge ye?* —*We ought to obey* GOD *rather than* MEN. Acts iv. 19.—v. 29.

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MDCCLXXIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

ADDRESS

To the free enquiring Chriſtians of Great-Britian, who imitate the Example of the NOBLE BEREANS, *in receiving the* WORD OF GOD *with all Readineſs of Mind, and ſearching the* SCRIPTURES *daily, whether the Doctrines taught by* MEN *are agreeable thereto.*

BRETHREN,

NOTWITHSTANDING all the diſcouragements that have been formerly in the way of free enquiry into religion, there are many of our fellow chriſtians, eſpecially in *Britain*, who now ſee it to be the duty and privilege of every individual chriſtian, to enquire as far as he is able, into every thing that his religion requires him either to believe or practiſe: And if there be any, to whom providence hath given a capacity and opportunity of enquiring into truth, with more leiſure and exactneſs than others, they ſhould uſe the talents heaven hath bleſſed them with, tho' not merely for themſelves, but for the inſtruction of others, who have not the ſame advantages which they have.

AS chriſtians ſhould be exemplary for virtue and goodneſs, ſo they ſhould be diſtinguiſhed from a corrupt world, by a diligent ſearch after *truth*, and an honeſt and open profeſſion thereof, notwithſtanding the difficulties and diſcou-

ragements they are liable to upon that account, which, with purity and holineſs of life,—univerſal love to mankind,—and patience under ſufferings which they cannot honourably avoid, will recommend the *truth* and cauſe of their crucified maſter, who ſuffered before them in the cauſe of *truth*. By ſuch methods, the doctrine of *Chriſt* prevailed in the hands of a few weak, inconſiderate men, without power, riches, or learning; in oppoſition to the leading intereſts of this world, in the hands of ſelf-intereſted prieſts, powerful princes, proud philoſophers, the wiſdom of men, and the prejudices of the people, under the influence of ſuperſtition and heathen darkneſs.

A DILIGENT ſearch after *truth* is the moſt commendable exerciſe of a chriſtian. It is a precious treaſure when found, and ſhould be purſued for its own ſake; liſtened to with attention, temper and charity; to it we ſhould give an open ear, candid mind, and ingenuous heart. As it carries with it the evidence of its own divinity, we ſhould pay it the reſpect it deſerves, not only by an inward conviction, but an open declaration of its perſpicuity, force, and efficacy. Every man that would be free, honeſt, and wiſe, has an intimate concern in the ſucceſs of *truth*; and is under a moral obligation to contribute all in his power, to the ſucceſs and ſervice thereof.

As *truth* cannot be wrong in itſelf, ſo it cannot lead to any thing wrong. It is our indiſpenſible duty to lie open to the evidence of *truth*, and lay aſide every bias and prejudice that may hinder us to embrace it. Above all things it ſhould engage our ſerious regards. *Truth* is the rule that GOD himſelf follows, he is engaged to defend it, and for this end ſent his Son into the world to *bear witneſs to the truth*. All our comfort in life and death depends upon our knowing and embracing the *truth*.

BE not then diſcouraged, *Brethren*, in your diligent ſearch

ſearch after *truth*, and cordial embracing of it when found, becauſe, perhaps, it agrees not with the received opinions of great men, whether ancient or modern; nor with ſchemes of religion, whether authorized by greater or leſſer authorities, eſtabliſhed in national churches, or adopted by diſſenting parties; none of theſe is the rule of your faith. The ſcriptures alone claim that honour. Whatever is added by human ſchemes or interpretations, ſhould be peremptorily rejected as dangerous innovations.

As to the *Ancients*, whatever eſteem others may have for them, you may certainly judge of what they taught with the ſame liberty, as of any other writers: Yea, the neglect of them can have no bad conſequence, ſince the divine rule, which teacheth all that is neceſſary, is complete without them.

The Fathers in the firſt three centuries, had no ſettled ſyſtems of religion but the ſcriptures, on which every one had his own ſpeculations, which differed as much as in any age ſince. On the doctrine of the Trinity eſpecially, they gave their imaginations great latitude, which appears from their expreſſions and explications of ſcripture on that point; ſo that it would be difficult to determine, what was the ſettled notions of theſe times, ſince they not only differed from one another, but with themſelves. But at the fourth century, in the heat of furious zeal and oppoſition, among proud contending parties, the doctrine was reduced to articles, which were armed with ſanctions, and the civil powers called in to enforce them, under the ſevereſt penalties; ſo that whom church authority could not convince, the ſecular power might compel, without any regard to ſcripture at all. Having aſſumed the power of dictating to fellow chriſtians, there followed every kind of unchriſtian treatment towards diſſenters from the ſchemes they had eſtabliſhed, and perſecution was carried on in the name of the Lord Jesus, the king of peace: And as it was neceſſary they ſhould be thought to have the countenance and approbation

probation of heaven, inſtead of ſcripture authority, the doctrine of miracles, pretended to be wrought by themſelves or predeceſſors, was propagated, which iſſued in all the ſuperſtition and ſervile worſhip of the *Romiſh Beaſt*.

WHATEVER weight was laid upon miraculous powers in the firſt centuries, and continued in the Romiſh church, to make their other doctrines and practices paſs for truth; and whatever reverence our modern Doctors may pretend is due to the doctrines of the ancients on that account, it will appear evident to every impartial enquirer, that no argument can be taken from that quarter, to favour the ſchemes invented by the ancients, but what equally tends to ſupport and countenance all the impoſtors of the church of *Rome* ſince that time: Nor can any argument be drawn from this, or any other thing but the ſcriptures, to make any doctrine paſs for truth, but what takes juſt as much authority from revelation, which alone, without *any* other help, authenticates the truths we ought to believe in religion. 'Tis a ſtrange compliment Proteſtants pay to Papiſts, in their avowed adherence to human traditions, in oppoſition to the ſcriptures as the only rule of faith!

IN ſuch a deplorable ſituation was religion from the fourth century, for many hundred years under all the tyranny, ſuperſtition, ignorance, and craft of the *Beaſt*, that the advocates for human authority among Proteſtants, find little but what they are aſhamed of, till the reformation from popery. "The Reformers, as a late author ſays, gave a violent ſhock to popery, by ſeparating from the church of *Rome*, caſting off the Pope's ſupremacy and infallibility, tranſlating the ſcriptures into the vulgar tongues, and aſſerting them *alone* to be the only rule of faith and doctrine. But having been born and educated in the error and ſuperſtition of *popery*, we cannot ſuppoſe, at their firſt emerging out of that profound darkneſs, their minds were at once completely illuminated. Many groſs errors they rejected,

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ſome they retained. But the grand miſtake was, after they had drawn ſchemes of faith from the ſcriptures, honeſtly no doubt, to the beſt of their abilities, either they or their followers, as if they had delivered the whole ſcripture truths without any mixture of error, erected thoſe ſchemes, tho' differing very much from one another, into rules, to be univerſally received."

IT ſeemed ſomewhat contradictory and very partial in in our Reformers from popery, that they ſhould teach the people to exerciſe their own judgments in rejecting the doctrines and worſhip of *Rome*; but at the ſame time, not allow them the exerciſe of their private judgments, in chuſing or refuſing the ſchemes of religion formed by themſelves. It is true, the ſcriptures were permitted to be read, but only in the ſenſe of theſe ſchemes: Any that diſputed them, were loaded with party-names; and chriſtian profeſſors were again led to hate, to caſt out, and ſeparate from one another, on account of the difference of ſentiments; in which they could not but differ, ſince a free and peaceable ſtudy of GOD's word was not allowed them.

IN Proteſtant ſchools, they that were educated for the miniſtry, were taught the doctrine they were to preach, not from the holy ſcriptures, but from ſyſtems of divinity, after the model of the popiſh ſchool-men, and taken chiefly from them. Their abſtract metaphyſical notions, terms of art, and diſtinctions, were retained, and ſtill applied to chriſtian principles. Their ſeveral creeds and churches were eſtabliſhed by the ſecular power, and the magiſtrate required his people to believe after the particular confeſſion, or articles he eſpouſed. Subſcriptions to human ſchemes were demanded,—men were conſtituted judges of ſcripture doctrine for whole nations and communities, and conſcience was again made reſponſible to earthly tribunals. Worldly emoluments were annexed to a ſuppoſed right belief, and heavy penalties inflicted upon recuſants: Except when the magi-

magiſtrate pleaſed on ſome occaſions, and under certain limitations, to grant a TOLERATION. †

THIS was only a change of *Popes*, but the popery remained. For tho' they reformed in ſeveral valuable reſpects, in this they were more inconſiſtent than thoſe they ſeparated from; to renounce infallibility, and yet impoſe and perſecute as infallible,—reject human authority, and in many caſes plead and reſt upon it,—permit the ſcriptures to be read, but not underſtood; or, which is the ſame, to be underſtood only in the ſenſe of ſchemes formed and eſtabliſhed by men.

TO tell us that theſe ſchemes were formed by the ableſt divines, is no ways to the purpoſe, and perhaps not altogether true. For if they had not only been *able* but *infallible*, they had no right or power to do what the divine Spirit had already done, and which no creature ſhould ever have any hand in, after he had finiſhed revelation as a rule of faith. They might be the ableſt for the times they lived in, and yet but comparatively weak. For being educated at popiſh ſchools, in times of great ignorance with regard to the ſcrip-

† IT ſeems ſtrange, however it came into the heads of chriſtians, who profeſſed to make the ſcriptures the rule of their religion, to think that a civil magiſtrate could have any power either to *limit* or *tolerate* religion. He cannot *limit* it, for human ſanctions, which can reach no further than outward appearances, cannot in the leaſt influence what is ſolely attained by a man's own ſentiments and choice. Had GOD deſigned the arm of magiſtrates to make chriſtians, he would have endued them with penetration ſuitable for the knowledge and influence of hearts.

AND as for *toleration*, there is ſomething extremely humbling in its emphaſis; as the right of private judgment, the privilege of a man's underſtanding and determining for himſelf, is the unalienable charter of every rational creature atteſted by GOD that created him, who has put it beyond the power of any man upon earth to think or judge for him: Muſt it not then be ſtrange to ſay, the magiſtrate indulges the man's weakneſs, in allowing him the exerciſe of an unalienable right and privilege?

ſcriptures, it cannot be ſuppoſed that ſuch as were newly come out of this ſituation, could be ſo perfect in what was in a manner new to them, as is commonly pretended. But however eminent they might be, the taſk was far too great for them, to compoſe and determine the preciſe rules of faith in their own words for all chriſtians. It needs no more evidence to prove their pride and weakneſs, than that they impoſed their own deciſions upon the conſciences of their fellow chriſtians, concerning the faith and the practice of religion. This was to lead chriſtians off the foundation and principle of religion, ſubjection, and allegiance to *Chriſt*, the LORD and Law-giver: And deſtroy that fundamental principle of the reformation, that the ſcriptures are a complete rule both of faith and practice; and as ſuch, are clear and intelligible in all neceſſary points, to every private chriſtian. Now, if the ſcriptures are a ſufficient rule, we do not want men in any age as guides; and if they are clear, they are not neceſſary as interpreters. The enquiring chriſtian cannot loſe much by the neglect of them, as the ſcriptures teach every thing clearly, that is neceſſary either to be believed or practiſed.

WE ſhall grant that thoſe who have gone before us, whether ancient or modern, were good, virtuous men; yet, for reaſons that might be given, they might not ſee the truths that yet are obvious in revelation; and ſhall their knowledge be the preciſe ſtandard of ours? What letters-patent, what ſpecial privilege of *divine authority* can they plead, to ſtop the progreſs of divine knowledge, and to engroſs our belief for all times to come? Or rather muſt the the truth GOD hath made known, be limited by any human underſtanding whatſoever? If they had known much leſs, was there any neceſſity upon us to ſeek for no more knowledge? And why might not they be under the ſame prejudices againſt examining for themſelves as we are,—pay the ſame reſpect for the opinions of others,

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that we are diſpoſed to ſhew for their's;—or imagined points of faith ſufficiently ſettled by predeceſſors, whom they reverenced;—Or perhaps like many of us, hold ſome truths ſo ſacred, and ſo far above human comprehenſion, as they durſt not examine them;—Or ſo clear by the interpretation of others, as to need no examination? Whatever one or more of theſe, or other unmentioned prejudices affected them, it is certain they were under the ſame temptations to be biaſed with others, at beſt were fallible, and therefore ſhould not have the honour due to *Chriſt*, whom we are to follow as our maſter *alone*.

MEN, of whatever character or denomination, ancient or modern, whether many or few ſince the Apoſtles, are by no means the rule of faith. There is no chriſtian can have any power to rule over other chriſtians, as judge of their conſciences and religion: And whoever uſurps ſuch a power, muſt be *Antichriſt*, and puts himſelf in the *place of God:* And as much as any ſubjects his underſtanding and heart to any man or church upon earth, he is guilty of *idolatry*. No, Brethren, our Dear LORD forbids us to call any man maſter, and every chriſtian has a divine warrant to examine and judge for himſelf. "1 Theſſ. v. 21. Prove all things, hold faſt that which is good. 1 John iv. 1. Believe not every ſpirit, but try the ſpirits whether they are of GOD. Phil. i. 9, 10. And this I pray, that your love may abound, yet more and more in knowledge, and in judgment, that ye may approve (try, *margin*) things that are excellent. Gal. i. 8, 9. If we or an Angel from heaven,—and again, if any man preach any other goſpel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accurſed." If the doctrines of *Angels* and *Apoſtles* were to be examined before received, it muſt be unaccountable ſtupidity to receive, without examination, the dictates of any ſince the Apoſtolic times.

OUR LORD expreſsly taught the doctrine of private judgment. "Luke xii. 57. Yea, and why even of yourſelves judge

judge ye not what is right?" The *Jewiſh* Rabbies imagined that their dictates and traditions were as binding as the written law, but our Saviour bids the diſciples "beware of this leaven, or corrupt doctrine of the *Phariſees*," and lets them know they had a right to judge for themſelves. John v. 39. "Search the ſcriptures.—If any man have not the Spirit of *Chriſt*, he is none of his.—He that is ſpiritual, judgeth all things." And the Apoſtles followed their divine maſter, enjoining the ſame duty. "Judge in yourſelves.—I ſpeak as to wiſe men: Judge ye what I ſay. 1 John v. 10. He that believeth on the ſon of GOD, hath the witneſs in himſelf." It ſhould read, "*holds the teſtimony for himſelf.*" Which points out the neceſſary connection betwixt a perſon's believing in the Son of GOD, and examining and knowing the teſtimony or record of GOD concerning his Son, on which his faith is built, *for himſelf.*

THE BEREANS were highly commended for ſearching the ſcriptures, to ſee if the *Apoſtles'* doctrine was agreeable thereto; and have the epithet of *noble* or *renowned*, and *honourable*, given them for ſo doing. Whereas the LORD finds fault with ſuch as blindly follow the dictates of men, "Hoſ. v. 11, 12. *Ephraim* is oppreſſed, and broken in judgment; becauſe he willingly walked after the commandment. Therefore will I be unto *Ephraim* a moth, &c." The commandment here is that mandate of *Jeroboam*, with his corrupt council of prieſts and princes, to worſhip the calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*; which was not only ſinful in them to appoint, but ſo in the people to comply with. Thoſe who will follow men in matters of religion, may expect to meet with the judgments of GOD, whom they reject as their guide.

IT muſt be highly commendable for every chriſtian to ſearch the ſcriptures, and compare the doctrines of men, with the pure word of GOD. There is no way of finding the faith once delivered to the ſaints, but by diligent ſearch

into the word. In receiving doctrines by tradition, we make void the love and goodneſs of GOD, and involve ourſelves in the guilt of the *Phariſees*, who made the commandments of GOD of no effect through their traditions. We are ready to blame the Papiſts for believing implicitly; but what are we better, if we take religion upon truſt, without evidence from revelation itſelf?

IT is a fault that prevails with moſt, that they neglect the ſtudy of the ſcriptures in general, and content themſelves with a few ſcraps, the meaning of which they take from others, and conſequently do not underſtand them; yet theſe they make the teſt of truth to them, and the ground of their principles, in contradiction to the whole tenor and ſcope of revelation. By much the greateſt part of mankind, have no other evidence for their belief of *Revelation itſelf*, than general received opinion; what has been held by their fathers, and all their acquaintance, paſſes for truth, and produces reſolutions and actions.

TRUTH is but one, it cannot be mouldered and defined as our prejudices, paſſions, temporal intereſts, or fancies would ſuggeſt: Nor can it be altered, mended, ſuppreſſed, or eſtabliſhed, by nations, ſynods, aſſemblies, congregations, or the agreement of parties. It is not what a *divine* may invent, or a *ſociety* approve; nor does it change to ſuit circumſtances, as the times change. Like its author, it is unchangeably the ſame, in all ages and generations.

TRUTH was very early corrupted by ignorant and ſuperſtitious men, who, from ſelf-conceitedneſs, were unſatisfied with the plainneſs of it: And it is ſtill miſunderſtood in many particulars, by ſuch as account themſelves the true proteſtants, and moſt perfect reformers: Nor will any one find it in its original purity, but by a free, diligent, and impartial ſtudy of revelation, in which its genuine principles are certainly explained: And whatever pains it may coſt, the diſco-

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very of a treaſure ſo valuable as *native truth* is, will richly reward the free enquirer. But whatever aſſiſtance is uſed, the work itſelf, no other perſon can do for us, every chriſtain muſt do it for himſelf, if he would have a religion that he can call his own.

BUT inſtead of taking religion from the Bible, if we take human ſyſtems and deciſions, or our own conceits and ſuppoſitions for our guide, like one who has loſt his way in the dark, and led by a falſe light, we will wander in the maze of error and deluſion,—loſe the beauties of *truth*,—and live unacquainted with that divine temper of ſoul,—that love, goodneſs, comfort, and holy courage, which the knowledge of the *truth* inſpires the mind with, which, like the natural ſun in the world, diffuſes its genial light and heat through the ſoul and converſation of him, who is poſſeſſed of it. It creates a joy, which ſtrangers to the exerciſe of ſearching the ſcriptures, do not intermeddle with, nor experience.

I CANNOT imagine how it ſhould never enter into the minds of ſuch as neglect to ſearch the ſcriptures, how they think to anſwer to GOD at the great day, for turning over ſo many volumes of human compoſitions, while they, perhaps, never ONCE in their life, cloſely and ſeriouſly read over the Bible, which above all others, contains the moſt excellent knowledge; and which above all others, every chriſtian is under the deepeſt obligation from GOD, and their own real intereſt, to ſtudy conſtantly, and know thoroughly.

IF any one would know the *truth*, he muſt certainly be acquainted with the rule of judging what is *truth*. That man's religion is uncertain and precarious, who is not acquainted with the ſcriptures. He may read books on religious ſubjects, and hear ſermons without number; but how ſhall he know what is *truth* or error, while he neglects to bring them to the ſtandard, by which alone they can be tried and known. He may judge of what one man ſays,

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by what he hath heard from another, whom he thought he could credit, which is far too frequently the caſe, but ſtill he may receive error in place of *truth*; and it is the more likely, as by this kind of judging, he puts the doctrines of men in the place of GOD's word, by which alone doctrines can be tried. What opinion would we have of a man, who ſhould ſet himſelf up to determine the moſt important cauſes in the civil courts of a nation, while he was ignorant of the ſtatute and ſtanding laws of the nation, to which all judges muſt have recourſe in their deciſions? Would any one chuſe to riſk a cauſe that nearly concerned him in ſuch hands? Much more inconſiſtent and dangerous is it, for any profeſſed chriſtian to pretend to judge for himſelf, (which every one ſhould do) without acquaintance with the laws and ſtatutes of CHRIST's kingdom, which are the only criterion of *truth*.

WHATEVER is built upon the foundation, (for all pretend to make the ſcriptures the foundation) muſt be tried by the pure truth therein revealed, whether it be gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, wood, hay, or ſtubble, to which the Apoſtle compares the doctrines of men. All muſt be tried by the fire of *truth*, before we can know of what ſort it is. What will not abide the trial, muſt be rejected, tho' he whoſe work it is, may be ſaved by the ſame *truth*, which deſtroys his work. "The fire ſhall try *every man's work* of what ſort it is.—If any man's work be burnt (as not fit to abide the trial) *he* ſhall ſuffer loſs, but he himſelf ſhall be ſaved; yet ſo as by fire." By that *truth* which deſtroys his work.

WITHOUT judging by this rule, there can be no religion at all: For he that does not believe *truth* upon his own perſuaſion that it is ſuch, after trial and examination, does not believe, but only ſays ſo. Revelation is given to individuals, not to men merely as collective bodies; and he who

who does not enquire and believe for himſelf, is an unbeliever of *God's word*, whatever foundation he otherwiſe reſts his faith upon.

BUT as the books of ſcripture, which are perfectly adapted for all the purpoſes of man's ſalvation, and eaſy to be underſtood, are really the revealed will of GOD to men, what power or authority can frame the leaſt ſupplement to them, eſpecially contrary to the ſcope and tenor of the doctrines therein made known, without incurring the higheſt guilt, and being anſwerable for all the ſouls they miſlead?

IT is a ſtrange infatuation which thouſands are under, who ſpend their time and parts in the ſtudy of other books, while they totally neglect, or but very ſuperficially read the ſcriptures! It is a dangerous error in practice, to give the preference to the works of men, whether heathen or chriſtian writers, ancient or modern, in point of frequent uſe and attention, while the ſcriptures have every thing that can recommend them to the daily ſtudy of a chriſtian. Any one who has looked over the remains of ancient learning, philoſophy, and the religion of nations; and has alſo but taken a curſory view of the Bible, muſt be filled with a ſtrong prepoſſeſſion in its favour, if he is not under the ſtrongeſt infatuation. In the former, nothing is to be met with but folly and impertinence; no tolerable view of the Deity, none of the duty of man from good principle and true motives; none of the chief and peculiar felicity of man, in the enjoyment of the favour of GOD. But in this Book, the praiſes of GOD are every where to be met with, as one, ſpiritual, infinite, eternal, merciful, long-ſuffering, perfect, &c. The duty of man is placed where it ought, and his felicity deſcribed to conſiſt in the enjoyment of GOD, through that medium which he in infinite grace and condeſcenſion hath provided and revealed to them. This is the ſpirit and language of the whole.

IF GOD had not revealed it, how could man have known that his ſin could be pardoned? Is there any thing in the light of *nature* to teach a man certainly, that the infinite, perfect, immutable, juſtice of GOD, will pardon, connive, or wink at ſin, which is a tranſgreſſion of the eternal law of order, in ſetting up another ſovereign, without ſome cauſe, or conſideration of infinite moment to interpoſe? Or, could nature find out that there was truly the interpoſition of ſuch a cauſe, as the atonement found out by infinite mercy, to ſatisfy immutable juſtice? The whole that the wit of man can diſcover concerning the nature, ways, and will of GOD, muſt be acquired, not by imagining vainly what is proper or improper for him to be, or to do; but by contemplating what he has done, and the ſerious conſideration of what he has revealed of himſelf in the ſcriptures.

IF we ſhall attempt to learn religion, from the various ſyſtems into which the contending parties among profeſſed chriſtians have manufactured it, and follow the intricate diſputes they have maintained about it, we will in the iſſue loſe our pains. For few are qualified for this ſearch, or competent judges in it: And when the taſk were at an end, (if poſſible) we would ſtill have chriſtianity to learn, and might probably conclude, that religion had not been at the bottom among the diſputants. But if we ſincerely apply to the ſcriptures, we ſhall find chriſtianity in its purity and ſimplicity, from the doctrines and practice of *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles, without any danger of being led aſide by any bias in the rule itſelf.

IT is no reaſon why we ſhould neglect the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, becauſe the learned have differed ſo much about the ſenſe of them; but rather a reaſon why we ſhould examine and judge for ourſelves. Tho' they differ, it does not follow that truth is not clearly taught in ſcripture, or that it is impoſſible to find it. They have differed about the ſenſe of ancient authors of every kind, however plain in them-

themſelves: And the ſcriptures have the advantage in point of perſpicuity, that no other book has the leaſt right to, namely, that they were indited by the wiſdom of GOD, for the general inſtruction of all mankind, in things neceſſary to be known and practiſed: And if they are not ſufficiently plain for that purpoſe, it is a groſs reflection upon the wiſdom of GOD, as well as his goodneſs, who certainly can make his mind known as intelligible as one man can do to another, in ſuch things as he requires every man to know; but this would be contrary to equity and juſtice, to require the knowledge of what he had not plainly revealed.

THE different comments on ſcripture, no ways affect the truth and evidence of chriſtianity, as contained in revelation. Tho' all the different ſchemes of religion, contained in the whole group of bodies of divinity, and other human compoſitions contrived by men, ſhould be called in queſtion and proved falſe, chriſtianity would by no means ſuffer by it; for this plain reaſon, becauſe religion neither in whole, nor in part, is fundamental, as it ſtands manufactured in theſe human compoſitions, but as it is recorded in ſcripture, which would be the ſame, tho' the other were conſigned to oblivion. Conſequently, whatever differences there are, they no way affect chriſtianity, but the human explications thereof. Differences among the learned, have often had this ſalutary effect, that they have occaſioned enquiring minds, after being bewildered by human diſputes, to look back to the ſcripture, where they have found the truth more clear than by all the laboured arguments of diſputants, who by their ſubtility render things unintelligible to common capacities. But the truth remains in its native ſimplicity, and open to the view of every diligent and impartial enquirer in revelation.

AMONG all the inventions of the Devil, there never was one ſo well calculated to render the ſcriptures uſeleſs to the

the generality of chriſtians, as the character commonly given them, that they are *dark*, *abſtruſe*, and *ill to be underſtood*. A more horrid falſehood cannot be uttered, nor a greater affront offered to the GOD of truth. Yet this is the foundation of all the pretended right of ſome dictating to others in matters of faith.—It hath been productive of all the ſchemes that have been impoſed upon mankind—And, I may ſay, of all the blood that hath been ſhed among religious zealots and devotees to ſyſtems invented by men.—It is the very foundation of popery: For once admit the principle, and we are more than half way to *Rome*, where we will find ample proviſion made for this great defect in the ſcriptures, by having an infallible interpreter to depend upon; which is certainly neceſſary if revelation is ſo dark, as after diligent enquiry, the things belonging to ſalvation cannot be underſtood from them.

THAT the ſcriptures are not eaſily underſtood, if the ſenſe of them is to be taken from the various explications that have been made of them, may be readily granted: But to maintain they are ſo in themſelves, is ſubverſive of the great end for which they were given to mankind. GOD hath provided for the ſalvation of the vulgar, by making his religion plain and eaſy to their underſtandings. It is an affront to our reaſon itſelf, to depend upon men for the meaning of that on which our ſalvation reſts, who at the ſame time that they would be confided in as the truſtees of the ſecret councils of heaven, in their great humility diſclaim the character of infallibility, and ſo by their own conſent, *may* deceive us in all that is dear to us.

SUCH as repreſent the ſcriptures to be myſterious, ſhould ſhew what it is that GOD requires chriſtians to believe, that is not clearly revealed in his word. There is not one text that will prove that any ſuch article of religion exiſts. But if they ſhould produce an article not clearly revealed, they have next to prove, that it is neceſ-

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ſary to ſalvation, which they can never do, ſeeing it is not ſo revealed; for all things neceſſary are clearly revealed in the ſcriptures, otherwiſe they could not make the man of GOD wiſe to ſalvation.

IT is not only the groſſeſt reflection on the *wiſdom* of GOD, who indited and impoſed the ſcriptures upon mankind as a rule of faith and practice, while they needed the aſſiſtance of ſome of the creatures who were to be ruled by them, before they could be intelligible to others: But alſo, upon the *goodneſs* of GOD, to command conformity to a rule, upon the pain of damnation, which was not in itſelf ſo clear and plain as to be underſtood by thoſe who were bound by it; and that he is reſolved to damn his creatures for want of capacities to know what he himſelf had made above their capacities.

IT is a ſtrange conceit men have of themſelves, and ſtill ſtranger opinion of their maker, that he ſhould not ſpeak in a book deſigned for the inſtruction of all, ſo as to be underſtood by them, whom he intended to inſtruct by it! Does not GOD, who made man, know what will ſuit their capacities, better than any number of men met in a ſynod or council? Every attack upon the perfection of revelation, is an attack upon the perfections of GOD himſelf, and plainly ſaying, he is not ſo capable to teach his creatures, as they are to teach one another.

NO ſooner did men think of dictating to others, than they propagated this opinion of the ſcriptures, to which, in a great meaſure, may be attributed all the ignorance that has prevailed among the generality of profeſſed chriſtians. The people being once perſuaded that the ſcriptures are *dark*, and *above* their capacities, are eaſily led away from the uſe of them to *other books*, which they think are neceſſary to make them plain, and unfold the myſteries which they ſuppoſe are otherwiſe incomprehenſible to them.

To mend this ſuppoſed defect in the ſcriptures, ſome men have ſummed up religion in ſyſtems, and by authority impoſed them upon whole nations, as teſts of orthodoxy to the adult, and rules of religious education for youth, who, by their parents and tutors, are taught to lay up theſe ſummaries in their minds, as the only neceſſary truths to be known, which it is criminal to forget, or in the leaſt to call in queſtion. The ground-work being laid in their acquaintance with human directories, they are confirmed in their adherence to them, by being admitted to all the privileges of the church they belong to, by ſhewing a very ſuperficial knowledge of what they have been taught in their childhood: From that time, they hold themſelves bound to believe and maintain all the doctrines adopted by the church or party they belong to. Hence, they reſt ſatisfied with what they have attained, and conſequently are as wiſe at *ſixteen* years old in religion, as at *ſixty*, which is far too frequently the caſe: And if they uſe the ſcriptures, it is with a ſtrong bias on their minds, in favour of what they have already received as undoubted truths; what is not agreeable to theſe, they paſs over ſuperficially, or pervert the obvious meaning of the texts, and force them into the ſervice of their cauſe. Thus they take the very reverſe method to finding the *truth*. For, whereas all doctrines ſhould be tried by the ſcripture, before they are received as *truth*, they firſt receive the doctrines, and then make the ſenſe of ſcripture agreeable to them. For the ſenſe of ſcripture is neither more nor leſs, than what ſuch men and books have ſaid it is. Such ſearchers are not likely to find the *truth*, nor yet embrace it when it evidently appears. What is plain and eaſy to a free enquirer, is dark and obſcure to them.

THERE are many, who under the influence of this bad opinion of the ſcriptures, that they are above their capacities, conclude themſelves in great humility (as they think)

think) unfit to judge for themſelves, and determine to be guided by certain *men* and *books*, which they approve of. Such perſons do not remember, that at the ſame time they are ſo ſelf-diffident, they are judging for themſelves in a manner that requires greater qualifications, than learning religion from the word of GOD itſelf. For, is not the choice of ſuch *men* and *books* an act of their judgment? And who taught ſuch ignorant perſons, as they reckon themſelves, to judge ſo preciſely, in ſo many things, where there was the greateſt danger of being miſtaken; and yet could not judge of doctrines laid down in the cleareſt manner, by the unerring wiſdom of GOD?

THERE is one ſpecial conſideration which merits univerſal attention; that as divine jealouſy will not remit without puniſhment, the heinous crime of parents, who train up their children in religion by precept or example, without ſhewing them the evidences from the word of GOD in ſupport thereof; ſo the plea of inſtruction and example made by children and poſterity, will be a very inſufficient apology for their having received principles of religion from their fathers, without uſing (when capable) their own underſtandings, in examining them by the word of GOD.

TO the obſcurity of the ſcriptures, there is commonly added another popular objection againſt people judging for themſelves, viz. That by allowing every one to judge for himſelf, the greateſt confuſion would take place, hereſies would abound, and there would be as many religions, as there are perſons to judge. It is neceſſary therefore, that the learned in councils or aſſemblies, ſhould reduce the true religion to certain heads, and require the conformity of the common people thereto, to preſerve them from error and diviſion, and to keep peace and good order among them.

SUCH precaution might be very commendable in a ſenate of a common-wealth, to contrive laws for the ſecurity

of its peace, and prevent dangers that might rent and divide it: But to argue the neceſſity of ſuch methods in religion, is making it a political tool, to keep up the ſpirit of obedience among the people. If allowing men to judge for themſelves, would naturally introduce difference in religion, and errors; then it muſt be certain, that conſent and agreement in religion, and keeping in the truth, flow from the conſtraint of this liberty. Such a religion may do for papiſts, but it is a ſhame for proteſtants to own it as their's. How would this maxim do in trade, phyſic, or philoſophy? They would be reckoned infatuate, that would be fond of buying goods in the dark, where they could not examine their qualities: To take that for gold, which they were not allowed to try: To call that a fine face, which they were not allowed to come ſo nigh as to know whether it was painted. This is the reaſon why falſe religions have ſo many followers, as that of *Mahomet*, becauſe none of its votaries dare examine it; and this objection inſinuates, that the goſpel ſhould be embraced for no better reaſon.

THIS is paying a poor compliment to the chriſtian religion, if it has not arguments in itſelf to prove the truth, and energy to influence the belief of it; but muſt have auxilliary aid from men, whoſe diminutive conceptions of it are ſuch, as would almoſt perſuade us, themſelves do not believe it. It is the honour of chriſtianity, that it needs no foreign aid to vindicate it. The evidence is in itſelf, not in what men can frame to eſtabliſh it. The laws and rules in itſelf, are ſufficient to preſerve its friends from ſuch important differences, as would overthrow the foundation of their hope, and manage leſſer differences which are not of ſuch conſequence. To ſuppoſe any other way *more* ſufficient, is to imagine that GOD ſhall conſtantly work a miracle in making ſome men infallible to direct the reſt; which in fact, is at the bottom of all that aſſumed power to form laws and rules, other than what are laid down in ſcripture to direct men in religion.

AND

AND it is much to be ſuſpected, if their fear about differences in religion, be not rather a fear that men ſhall ſee the weakneſs of their pretenſions to ſuch power, and be led to take their religion from the ſcriptures alone, independent of their deciſions, which to them would be of fatal conſequence indeed; but is a genuine effect of people judging freely for themſelves. All directors in religion have experienced this, and no wonder they are afraid of what would deſtroy their power of keeping the people ſolely under their direction.

BUT what if ſome men ſhould abuſe the privilege of judging for themſelves, muſt means be uſed to prevent this, which are not of GOD's appointing? He hath no where told us of this remedy, that ſome men ſhall have power to dictate to others. Nor can even this remedy anſwer the end; for tho' the church of *Rome* pretend to be under an infallible guide, yet they cannot prevent differences in their communion: And what is more, differences abounded in the Apoſtles' times, who were really infallible in their dictates to the churches. GOD does not want either the power or policy of men to preſerve the unity of his church, ſo far as he wills it ſhould be preſerved: GOD hath ſaid there muſt be hereſies, but men have ſaid there muſt be none. What can be ſuppoſed more dangerous, than for men to put it out of their own power ever to correct an error, tho' of the moſt dangerous nature, by eſtabliſhing it as a rule, never to acknowledge a fault in the ſyſtem men have compoſed for them, and bind themſelves by ſolemn oath, to defend every article, right or wrong, for ever? This is not only firſt ſuppoſing the ſyſtem infallibly right; but for ever depriving themſelves of the means to know the leaſt error, in what they have once, with very little, or perhaps no examination, determined on. This is making GODS of men, and believing they can neither deceive nor be deceived. Such perſons would do well to conſider, before they riſk too much, the import of that commination, "Thus ſaith the

LORD

LORD, curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the LORD."

ALLOW me, *Brethren*, to cloſe the conſideration of this ſubject at this time, by a ſhort addreſs to thoſe people, who excuſe themſelves from the duty of ſearching the ſcriptures, and the uſe of means to enable them to judge for themſelves, by pretending that PROVIDENCE puts them in ſuch ſituations of life, that they have no time to uſe ſuch means, being obliged to labour and care for the neceſſaries of life. Thus the people excuſe themſelves, and the teachers are willing to admit it as ſufficient.

BE aſtoniſhed, O heavens, at the audacious reproach caſt upon the wiſdom and goodneſs of thy creator's *providence!* Who, O man, has been ſo cruel as to condemn thee to this ſlavery! Not the meek and compaſſionate JESUS, who bids us firſt ſeek the kingdom of GOD, and his righteouſneſs, and hath promiſed that all other things ſhall be added,—forbidden us to take *anxious* care for the things of this world, for we know not what a day may bring forth.—Not the *Apoſtle*, who directs us to ſeek thoſe things which are above,——to ſet our affections on things above, and not on things on earth. Ponder the divine queſtions, "What is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? What ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?" Pray, for what end was you ſent into the world? What is your moſt material concerns in it? Is it not to learn to know, and to do the will of your creator? Conſider, whether all the time GOD hath given you, hath been well uſed, before you charge GOD fooliſhly. What became of the time of child-hood and youth, when GOD hath ſo ordered it, that man is unfit for work and care, pointing it out as the time for inſtruction? Why was you not taught the doctrines of the goſpel, and the grounds of the chriſtian religion then? Let parents, teachers, and yourſelves ſhare the guilt of this neglect: GOD's *providence* is clear.—What have you done on all the

Sabbath;

Sabbaths you have had, in which, by the laws of GOD and the land we live in, we ceaſe from labour? Here is one *ſeventh* of your life free of the entangling excuſe. Add to the former, all the days and hours ſpent in feaſting, gaming, drinking, ſporting, pleaſures of different kinds, and perhaps a great deal in indolence and ſloth, it will be found the higheſt injuſtice in men, to complain for want of time, who can ſpare ſo much to ſuperfluous, trifling, and often wicked purpoſes. When that time, which is now devoured in vain purſuits, anxious or inordinate cares, idle extravagancies, and vicious pleaſures, is reſtored to you, you will have enough to anſwer all the calls of religious enquiry. You will proſecute your callings with chriſtian diligence, and find the ſweeteſt refreſhments, in ſuch days and hours as you appropriate to the momentuous concerns of an everlaſting ſtate.

☞ AS to the following work, be aſſured, *Brethren*, that to aſſiſt you in the further exerciſe of that commendable duty of enquiry after *truth*, I have ſpent ſome time in illuſtrating from revelation, ſome points in religion, which the generality of profeſſed chriſtians ſeem either to neglect the right underſtanding of, or by certain means have miſtaken notions about: And as the right knowledge of GOD, is the true foundation of all the right underſtanding we can have in religion, I thought proper, *firſt*, to preſent to your conſideration, what I find revealed concerning GOD. This I have done in the *firſt* and *ſecond* parts: But as my ſentiments on that ſubject, do not coincide with the common eſtabliſhed doctrine in the ſchemes of religion, adopted by profeſſed chriſtians, it was therefore neceſſary to examine theſe, that the reaſons may appear why I differ from them. This makes a *third* part.

I HAVE not ſaid any thing more in any of the parts than *truth* obliges me, according to the moſt ſerious view I can at preſent take of it; and I hope no conſideration whatever

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ſhall prejudice me ſo far, as to make me deny or diſſemble, what the conviction of my own mind from the word of GOD requires me to confeſs. I have made revelation *alone* the rule of my judgment, not any opinions or ſchemes of men. Notwithſtanding, I do not maintain, that I have every where either fully or infallibly given the ſenſe of revelation; the weakneſs and imperfections of the man will appear in all his endeavours, to ſet things of this kind in a clear light, however honeſt and impartial he may be. But I am ſatisfied, you will not find any of theſe ſubtle arts commonly employed, either to colour a bad cauſe, or perplex a good one. Intricate refinements, forced conſtructions, and evaſive diſtinctions, are carefully avoided. Plain reaſoning, founded on ſcripture evidence, and adapted to plain and honeſt minds, is ſtudied through the whole. But if any of my readers are ſo wedded to any particular ſcheme, as to think it ſinful to offer any further light on the ſubject, they may let this book alone: For I can aſſure them, it is not adapted to any ſcheme, further than I judged they agree with revelation.

BUT as to you, my *Brethren*, who dare think cloſely and freely, I hope you will accept in good part what is well meant. If you receive any profit, return thanks to GOD, to whom alone all praiſe is due: But if you judge that I have fallen ſhort of the *truth*, or mixt it in any particular; in this caſe, you will mind the common rule of juſtice, to do to me, as reaſon and revelation will tell you, I ought to do to any of you, were you the author, and I the reader. I do not thus beſpeak my readers, becauſe ſo ſcrupulous with regard to conſequences as many are. I not only chuſe to ſeek, but to ſpeak the *truth*: And it breeds comfort upon every new reflection, that divine providence hath preſerved me from theſe ſervile reſtraints, in which many are involved from particular connections, the view of preferment, and the ſuppoſed ſweets of an ambitious life. When any *truth* begins to open, I am not upon the reſerve, leſt I ſhould puſh

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the diſcovery too far, a caution ſtrictly attended to by ſuch as are trained up in the trammels of a church, whoſe religion is all ſettled in a ſyſtem, which the light of truth is ready to expoſe as derived from error, or ſuperſtition; and impoſed upon many, to ſerve the intereſts of a few. Such are commonly fired with rage againſt thoſe who diſcover truth, and perſecute under pretence of glorifying GOD. But whatever others may think on this ſubject, I content myſelf with the diſcharge of my duty to you, *Brethren*, by a free declaration of my ſentiments, and indulge the ſame liberty to every one elſe: But you muſt not be ſurprized, if I leave the common tract of interpreters, even the moſt admired for orthodoxy;—as I freely decline any regard to them as a *Rule* in believing for myſelf, or ſhewing to others the truth taught in the *word of* GOD.

HENCE, you need not think it ſtrange, that I have cited no human authorities for proof of any thing advanced: Theſe I have purpoſely neglected; *firſt*, becauſe human authorities have been ſo frequently enſnaring to readers, by determining their judgment according as the men or books were, or were not their favourites. With ſuch readers, a favourite author is of more weight than ſeveral plain texts, and therefore they are in danger of receiving error for the ſake of good company: Alſo, becauſe human authorities cannot prove any truth in religion. If they are added to ſcripture texts, it inſinuates that the ſcripture is not ſufficient without them. If they are uſed alone, it is either that they are expected to have more effect upon the reader than ſcripture; or becauſe there are not any texts that will prove the point, which is enough to bring both it and the human authorities under ſuſpicion. I confeſs there are ſeveral borrowed ſentiments in the following work: But as I have to the beſt of my knowledge, adopted nothing but what is agreeable to ſcripture, it is no matter of moment to the reader whoſe they are, if he finds them to be *truth*.

I MUST alſo notice, that tho' one text is ſufficient to prove any doctrine, if it is plainly expreſſed or implied in it: Yet I have often added ſeveral texts to prove one point, becauſe the ſame text does not always appear to be ſo conſpicuous a proof of the ſame point to different perſons; and partly to ſhew how copiouſly the ſcriptures prove ſuch doctrines, when the evidence is collected into one point of view, and to leave them as much as poſſible beyond doubt.

I FREQUENTLY read the text otherwiſe than it is in our Engliſh tranſlation. The reader will obſerve the different reading is generally put in parentheſis, if not more fully pointed out. If he find upon examination, that the common tranſlation is nearer the original than my alterations, he will do well to keep by it; but if otherwiſe, I hope the freedom I have uſed this way will be acceptable to him; and with other things that may appear new at firſt ſight, be fairly examined, and candidly interpreted. "*Prove all things, hold faſt that which is good.*"

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*** Not to swell the contents too much, many useful particulars are omitted in them, which the attentive reader will find in perusing the book. In the two last sections, many texts are explained and illustrated, which are only mentioned here in general.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE are but two ways by which we can attain to any knowledge of God. In the great volume of creation, or the works (including the providence) of God, he hath manifeſted himſelf in ſuch a manner, as to leave every rational ſpectator inexcuſable who ſhall doubt of his exiſtence, or ſet up any creature before, or beſides the creator as the object of their reverence and eſteem. This the Apoſtle teaches the *Romans*, when he ſays, "The inviſible things of Him (God) are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head (Deity); ſo that they are (that they may be) without excuſe."

BUT, tho' by reaſoning from the works of creation, we come to the knowledge of the exiſtence of a firſt cauſe; yet, by this way, we can never come to have any direct or ſimple idea of God. The greateſt length we can go, is, to remove from our notions of the creator, all the imperfections we find among creatures, and attribute to him, all their perfections or good qualities: And, that the Supreme Being we thus conceive of, may be as *ſpiritual* as may be, we particularly attribute to him the perfections of our *minds*; and after all, conclude that theſe are in him in the *abſtract*, but not ſo in

us. This is only ſaying, the perfections in the Supreme Being are of a different *ſpecies* from our's, and ſo cannot admit of *compariſon* in any degree. By all our reaſoning, we cannot *poſitively* determine any thing concerning *ſpirit*: The notions we have thereof are all *negative*. We may call it an *immaterial ſubſtance*, ſomething that is not matter; which is the ſame as to ſay, we know nothing about it. How adequate the conceptions of mankind might have been of God, from the contemplation of created objects if they had remained innocent, I ſhall not pretend to know: But it is evident beyond diſpute, that the works of creation are utterly inſufficient to direct mankind to that knowledge of God, which is neceſſary for them in their *fallen* or *ſinful ſtate*. Therefore, God, of his unbounded goodneſs, hath mercifully ſupplied the great defect, by giving mankind a *verbal revelation* of his character, every way ſuited to the ſtate and weak capacities of ſinful men.

THIS revelation of God is contained in the Old and New Teſtaments, which, taken together, is the *rule*, the *only rule*, to us in all things concerning faith and ſalvation. When we approach theſe *ſacred oracles* for inſtruction, we ſhould be ſtript of all prejudice and prepoſſeſſion to received opinions from men, and be ready to receive what the *divine author* doth teach, upon his own authority only, which is ſufficient teſtimony to the truth of every thing contained therein. And with reſpect to the *manner* of ſome things which may be myſterious, we ought humbly to keep within the verge of divine revelation, and not venture to ſound the depths of divine myſteries, (that is, things *unrevealed*) by the ſhort line of our finite underſtandings, which is infinitely too ſhort to meaſure the height and depth of the

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ſecret things of the Moſt High. Here it is more becoming the chriſtian to adore and admire, than curiouſly to ſearch and enquire. It is no ways neceſſary in religion to know what God hath not been pleaſed to reveal.

ONE particular doctrine, the reality of which God hath been pleaſed to reveal, tho' the *manner* of it continues a ſecret, is, that he himſelf is ONE, and that he is THREE. The *truth* of this is indiſputable, if we can credit *his* teſtimony who has revealed it to us: But if we reject his authority in this inſtance, we may with equal propriety refuſe it in every other part of revelation, and ſo render it wholly uſeleſs to us as a rule of either faith or practice. If God hath told us that it is ſo, the obligation to believe it is binding upon us, tho' the *manner how it is* remains only proper for his own infinite mind to inveſtigate.

BUT there is a very wide difference between what is revealed in ſcripture, and the nice ſpeculations of the ſchools concerning the doctrine of the Trinity. The ſchoolmen, who abounded in wit and leiſure, have been very ſpeculative and acute in ſtarting a great number of ſubtilties concerning it, which no chriſtian is bound to trouble his head about; much leſs is it neceſſary for him to underſtand thoſe niceties, which we may reaſonably preſume thoſe who invented them, did themſelves never thoroughly underſtand; and, leaſt of all, is it neceſſary to believe them. The modeſty of chriſtians is contented in divine things, to know what *God* hath ſaid concerning them, and has no curioſity to be *wiſe above what is written*. What God reveals is enough in theſe matters; but if any will venture to ſay more, every other man ſurely is at liberty to believe as he ſees cauſe.

As our knowledge of God in this world is more properly converſant about what he is *not*, than what he is in himſelf; the utmoſt care ſhould be taken in all our conceptions of God, to remove every thing that is not agreeable to what he hath made known of himſelf in his own word; which is all we can know of him with certainty, and of real uſe to us, on this ſide the full enjoyment of himſelf in glory.

Tho' there is much difficulty at preſent, to aſcertain the full and true import of the ſeveral titles whereby the Great Creator of heaven and earth is deſigned, in any language; yet, this we may venture to ſay we are ſure of, that they never were intended to give us a clear and full comprehenſion of the divine nature, or the preciſe *manner* in which the Supreme Being doth exiſt. This is what even the moſt glorious and extenſive finite reaſon can never poſſibly comprehend to perfection. It muſt then follow as a neceſſary conſequence, that the words in all languages by which it has been endeavoured to be explained, muſt be as defective as our comprehenſions are.

Were it poſſible for us fully to comprehend all the properties which neceſſarily diſtinguiſh the Supreme Being from all beings, and to have adequate words to expreſs our conceptions, it is likely diſſentions on this head would be at an end. But as this, in the nature of things, is not to be expected; and as many, by attempting it in words of their own conceiving, have but darkened counſel with words without knowledge, the beſt way is, to confine ourſelves to the holy ſcriptures, and ſay no more of God, than he hath been pleaſed to teach us. But as to the *manner* of his exiſtence, I do not find from revelation that he hath taught us any thing at all.

When

When *Moſes* aſked him what was his name, he anſwered by a word I AM, or, I WILL BE; which does not convey any notion of the manner how he exiſted, (as has been often pretended); tho' it implies abſolute exiſtence, as well as irreſiſtable power to accompliſh what he had promiſed, or was pleaſed to do. But this does not in the leaſt degree favour the empty ſpeculations that have been framed concerning the nature and exiſtence of God. His nature being infinite and incomprehenſible, the mode of his exiſtence muſt neceſſarily be above the inveſtigation of every finite capacity. Here all analogy and compariſon are utterly uſeleſs and trifling.

TWO things in general are intended in the following work.

Firſt, *To draw out to the conſideration of the enquiring chriſtian, a brief connected view of what the ſcriptures ſay concerning the Trinity, or the* THREE *that are* ONE.

Secondly, *To ſhew how little regard is due from chriſtians, to the ſubtle diſtinctions invented among men concerning that ſubject.*

THE firſt of theſe, for the reader's eaſe, and greater diſtinctneſs, I ſhall divide into two parts, and each of the parts into ſections, as the matter treated of ſhall require.

PART

PART FIRST.

IN this firſt part, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew plain ſcripture evidence for theſe three particular points:

Firſt, THAT there is but ONE GOD.

Secondly, THAT there is a PLURALITY in GOD, and that it is limited to THREE.

Thirdly, THAT EACH of the THREE hath aſcribed to him in ſcripture the NAMES and PERFECTIONS proper only to GOD. Or that the NAMES and PERFECTIONS proper only to DEITY are COMMON to THREE that ARE ONE.

SECT. I.

THE firſt thing undertaken is, *to prove that there is but one* GOD.

HERE I might tire the reader's patience, by a long train of arguments, commonly advanced to prove that there *can* be no more than *one God*: But as

as I have engaged to keep to *ſcripture evidence*, and this being a point never queſtioned by any denomination of chriſtians, let it ſuffice to name a few texts concerning the *unity* of God, and the perfections peculiar to him for proof of it. (*a*) "I am the LORD (JEHOVAH) and there is *none elſe*, there *is no* GOD *beſides me*. (*b*) *Thou, even thou art* JEHOVAH *alone*. (*c*) That men may know, that thou *whoſe name alone is* JEHOVAH, art the *moſt high over all the earth*. (*d*) Know ye that the LORD he is GOD, it is he that made us. (*e*) Who ſhall not fear thee, O LORD, and glorify *thy name*, for thou *only* art holy. (*f*) And there are diverſities of operations, but it is the *ſame God, who worketh all in all*. (*g*) The *ſame God over all*, is rich unto all that call upon him. (*h*) Hear, O *Iſrael*, the LORD our GOD is ONE LORD. (*i*) Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but GOD *is one*. (*k*) We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is *none other God but one*. To us there is but *one* GOD, the father, *of whom are all things*. (*l*) For thou art great, and doſt wonderous works: *Thou art God alone*. (*m*) But the LORD is the *true* GOD, he is the *living God*, and an everlaſting king. (*n*) For there is *one* GOD, and one mediator between *God* and *men*, the man *Chriſt Jeſus*. (*o*) Thou believeſt that there is *one* GOD; thou doſt well.

WHERE the perfections peculiar to *Deity* are mentioned in ſcripture, the *unity* thereof is either expreſsly taught, or neceſſarily underſtood; excluding in the plaineſt terms every idea of a *plurality of Gods*.

REVE-

(*a*) Iſa. xlv. 5. (*b*) Neh. ix. 6. (*c*) Pſa. lxxxiii. 18. (*d*) ibid c. 3. (*e*) Rev. xv. 4. (*f*) 1 Cor. xii. 6. (*g*) Rom. x. 12. (*h*) Deut. vi. 4. (*i*) Gal. iii. 20. (*k*) 1 Cor. viii. 4. 6. (*l*) Pſa. lxxxvi. 10. (*m*) Jer. x. 10. (*n*) 1 Tim. ii. 5. (*o*) Ja. ii. 19.

REVELATION gives us a clear account of *one Being* who is ALMIGHTY and OMNIPOTENT.—(*p*) "*I am the almighty God*; walk before me, and be thou perfect. (*q*) *I am God almighty*; be thou fruitful and multiply. (*r*) And they reſt not day and night, ſaying, holy, holy, holy, *Lord God almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* (*s*) And I heard as it was the voice of a great multitude, ſaying, *alleluia*: for the *Lord God omnipotent reigneth.* (*t*) He doth according to *his will* in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: And none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, what *doſt thou?* (*u*) Whatſoever the *Lord pleaſed*, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the ſeas, and in all deep places. (*v*) *He* maketh all things, ſtretcheth forth the heavens *alone*, and ſpreadeth abroad the earth *by himſelf.* (*w*) Upholdeth all things by the word of *his power.* (*x*) *God* who quickeneth the dead, and calleth thoſe things that be not as tho' they were."

——— INFINITE.—Which includes INCOMPREHENSIBLENESS, IMMENSITY, and OMNIPRESENCE. (*y*) "Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty to perfection? High as heaven, what canſt thou do? Deeper than hell, what canſt thou know? (*z*) How little a portion is heard of him? The thunder of his power who can underſtand? * Behold God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be ſearched out. Heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain *thee*,—(*a*) who hath meaſured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a ſpan, and comprehended the duſt of

(*p*) Gen. xvii 1. (*q*) ibid. xxxv. 11. (*r*) Rev. iv. 8. (*s*) ibid. xix. 6. (*t*) Dan. iv. 35 (*u*) Pſa. cxxxv. 6. (*v*) Iſa. xliv. 24. (*w*) Heb i. 3. (*x*) Rom. iv. 17. (*y*) Job xi. 7, 8. (*z*) ibid. xxvi. 14. and xxxvi. 26. * 1 Kings viii. 27. (*a*) Iſa. xl. 12, 22.

of the earth in a meaſure, and weighed the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in a balance.—He ſitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſshoppers;——that ſtretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and ſpreads them out as a tent to dwell in.—(*b*) Great is the Lord, and of great power: His underſtanding is infinite,—greatly to be praiſed; and his greatneſs is unſearchable. —(*c*) Am I a God at hand, ſaith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himſelf in ſecret places that I ſhall not ſee him? Do not I fill heaven and earth? ſaith the Lord.

——ETERNAL.—*Without* BEGINNING, END, *or* SUCCESSION.—(*d*) "From everlaſting to everlaſting thou art God.—(*e*) Thou, O Lord, ſhalt endure for ever, and thy years ſhall have no end.—(*f*) One day is with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day."

——UNCHANGEABLE.—(*g*) "I am the Lord, and change not.—(*h*) The father of lights, with whom is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning.——(*i*) The ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever."

THERE are many texts which point out the *one divine Being* to be ALL-SUFFICIENT, ABSOLUTELY GREAT, GOOD, and INDEPENDENT on any other being in his *perfections* and *operations*. He is the creator of heaven and earth, with all that they contain,—the preſerver of all—by him all things conſiſt—in him they live, move, and have their being—he opens his hand liberally, and ſatisfies

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(*b*) Pſa. cxlvii. 5, and cxlv. 3. (*c*) Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. (*d*) Pſa. xc. 2. (*e*) ibid. cii. 12, 27. (*f*) 2 Pet. iii, 8. (*g*) Mal. iii. 6. (*h*) Jam. i. 7. (*i*) Heb. xiii. 8.

the deſire of every thing that lives—his kingdom ruleth over all—he is the governor among the nations—the one law-giver, who is able to ſave and to deſtroy—there is none good but one, *that is* GOD.

Now, as it is abundantly evident from theſe texts, (and reaſon alſo teacheth us) that there is but *one firſt cauſe*, and *ultimate end* of all things—*one infinite, eternal, unchangeable Being*—*one almighty* and *omnipotent*, whom no being can oppoſe or reſiſt—*one*, who *created* and *uniformly governs* all things to *one* certain end—*one*, who poſſeſſes all theſe perfections which the ſcriptures attribute to Deity. I ſay, ſince there *can* be but *one Being*, who is the author of all things, and the *ultimate end* of them, it muſt follow, that there is but *one* divine Being, who is to be *worſhiped* as the *ſupreme object of all religious adoration*—*one*, who is the *chief good* and *center* of happineſs—who is to be ſerved and loved with all the *heart*, *ſoul*, and *ſtrength*, and conſequently but *one God*. Hence, every one who credits revelation, (with thoſe who do not, I have no buſineſs at this time) may join with *David* in ſaying, (*k*) "O *Lord*, there is *none like thee*, neither is there *any God beſide thee*, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

(*k*) 1 Chro. xvii. 20.

SECT.

SECT. II.

THE next thing promiſed, was to ſhew that the ſcriptures teach us there is a DIVINE PLURALITY, and that it is limited to THREE.

INFINITE wiſdom and divine prudence, appear conſpicuouſly in the revelation of the ſcripture character of GOD. A divine plurality is copiouſly pointed out, and at the ſame time the divine unity every where ſtrictly taught and maintained.

THIS would have appeared with brighter evidence, if the Tranſlators of the Bible into *Engliſh* had given us the words JEHOVAH and ELOHIM where they occurred, without any tranſlation: Or told the *Engliſh* reader, how he ſhould know when the words LORD and GOD, which they have tranſlated them by, had JEHOVAH and ELOHIM for their originals. But as they have given us theſe words, not only from JEHOVAH and ELOHIM, but from other original words of another meaning, the reader not only loſes the peculiar beauties pointed forth in thoſe words that LORD and GOD are taken from; but is bewildered in ſeeking the ſcope and meaning of many paſſages where they are promiſcuouſly uſed: Whereas, if a diſtinction had been preſerved in the tranſlation, or the words expreſſed from the original, and the ſenſe of them once pointed out in the *margin*, *contents*, or *otherwiſe*, the Old Teſtament would have appeared a more intelligible book to the enquiring *Engliſh* reader, or hearer, than it has often done.

ONE, among many inſtances which might be given,

given, is that text which ſhould read, (*l*) "Hear, O Iſrael, JEHOVAH, our ELOHIM, is one JEHOVAH." Which is rendered, "Hear, O Iſrael, the LORD our GOD is one LORD."

IT does not affect my preſent argument, how much difficulty the *Engliſh* reader of this text will be in, to know whether the word LORD here be taken from JEHOVAH, which is peculiar to Deity; or from ADONI, which implies *lordſhip*, *dominion*, or *government*, and is not peculiar to God alone; tho' by retaining the word JEHOVAH, as in ſeveral other texts, it would have been evident. What eſpecially concerns my purpoſe, is the evidence of a *divine plurality* ſo plain in the face of the text, had it not been obſcured, or rather quite loſt, by uſing the word GOD, which is by no means a proper tranſlation of the word ELOHIM.

NOR need I here ſtay to prove that ELOHIM is of a *plural* ſignification. This is acknowledged by the *Jews*, who beſt knew the meaning of their own language; and likewiſe by chriſtians, who know the *Hebrew*, and are under no temptation to impoſe a falſe meaning upon it. Any thing that has been advanced to the contrary is ſo trifling, as to be unworthy of notice. Even the impartial *Engliſh* reader will readily ſee, that the very ſenſe of the phraſe neceſſarily leads him to ſeek for a *plural* interpretation: For if the word ELOHIM in the text be of a *ſingular* ſignification, then the word *God*, by which it is tranſlated, will evidently point out the *unity* of the divine Being, and ſo would introduce an inſipid repetition of the ſame thing. The text would convey no other idea, than that the *one divine*

(*l*) Deut. vi. 4.

divine Being, is the *one divine Being*. It muſt appear to be a low conceit of the conſummate wiſdom of God, to imagine that he would give us a revelation of ſo ſmall conſequence. For if the word ELOHIM is ſingular, the text is no more than a revelation that ONE is ONE. But as it is demonſtratively evident that ELOHIM is of a *plural* ſignification, it muſt follow, that the word GOD cannot convey a ſuitable idea of the ſenſe of this expreſſion uſed here by the divine ſpirit.

THE true ſenſe of this term, if attentively conſidered, is of great importance in the preſent argument of proving a *divine plurality*, which it puts beyond diſpute. It is alſo a key to open many paſſages of ſcripture, which, without the right underſtanding thereof, appear dark, and ready to be miſapplied.

BUT as there are ſeveral falſe ideas, which ſome may perhaps affix to the word ELOHIM as a plural, it will be therefore neceſſary to remove theſe, that the true ſenſe may appear with more evidence to be the *only one*, and of that conſequence it really is, for the right underſtanding the character of GOD given us in revelation.

1. AS ELOHIM is a *plural*, it cannot be a general name to denote the *one divine Being*, ſuch as the word GOD is; nor can this be a proper tranſlation of it, for theſe two reaſons: *Firſt*, AS ELOHIM is plural, it muſt of neceſſity convey the ſame idea to the *Hebrews*, that GODS do to *Engliſhmen*; which introduces a palpable contradiction into revelation, that the divine Being ſhould conſtantly teach therein, that there is only one GOD; and yet wherever he ſpeaks of himſelf, to call himſelf GODS.

It

It is a poor ſhift to alledge, that the author of revelation took up with the word which he found in uſe among men, to convey the idea which the word GOD doth to us. For, beſides that it will be hard to ſay what that idea was, or how they came by it, previous to revelation: The plural termination would ſtill ſo perplex the idea of *unity* he was inculcating, that had all the ſubtle *Doctors* and metaphyſical divines, which have been ſince the Apoſtles days, exiſted at that time, their whole fund of definition could not have furniſhed a *ſalvo*.

BUT *ſecondly*, Another reaſon why the divine Being would not adopt a plural word to denominate himſelf by, is the remarkable proneneſs of theſe ages to *polytheiſm*. Would not boundleſs wiſdom and goodneſs carefully avoid every word or phraſe that favoured their corrupt bias? A bias which was ſo offenſive to him, and which coſt his people ſo dear, on account of their obſtinacy in that very point: Or would he not only uſe the plural word, which carried ſuch a ſnare in it, but have embarraſſed the idea of unity ſtill more, by conſtructing it with plurals, both verbs and nouns? May we not venture to determine it is impoſſible?

2. NOW, as ELOHIM cannot be a name that ſtands for the unity of the divine Being; neither can it be a word ſubſtituted to expreſs the different characters of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, in which the divine Being has manifeſted himſelf in revelation. Theſe are ſo diſtinguiſhed by the different lights in which omnipotence is diſplayed by each of them, that *one* common name is not ſufficient to convey an adequate idea of theſe diſtinctions.—They are deſigned to be kept always intelligibly diſtinct

diſtinct in the conceptions of mankind; whereas a *common name* can convey no ſeparate views of their peculiar characters and operations.

3. NEITHER can the name ELOHIM import all, or any of the *perfections or attributes* common to each of the *three* who are *one*; for that would infer all that might be ſaid of the impropriety of the word GODS. And ſure nobody would chuſe to ſay infinite WISDOMS, or infinite GOODNESSES, any more than they would ſay GODS. Whether we expreſs attributes ſeparately or complexly, it ſtill runs us up (when we conſider it with attention) to the ſame idea of a plurality of beings, poſſeſſed of theſe perfections: And ſtrongly inſinuates, that there are more than *one* to be worſhiped and adored.

AND ſince none of theſe can be the ſignification of the word ELOHIM, there is only one we can poſſibly reſt in, which is, that in its ſignification it refers to a TRANSACTION common to all the *three* who are *one*; and muſt be a common deſignation of all the THREE, as ſtated in that TRANSACTION. I ſay, a tranſaction (for it cannot allude to attribute or perfection) common to all the three, and which they themſelves acted in with regard to one another. I ſay with regard to one another; becauſe all their actions towards men, are applicable to one or other of the different relations they manifeſt themſelves in to us.

AND this TRANSACTION, ſo plainly intimated in divine revelation, is the baſis of the whole future manifeſtation of the divine glory diſcovered to, and applied for the benefit of man. And as the word ELOHIM intimates the *obligation* of that *tranſaction* among the divine three, ſo it always ſuggeſts the cha-

racter

racter of GOD in revelation to us in that view, as the moſt comfortable, and at the ſame time, awful light in which he can ſtate himſelf to mankind; and may with ſome propriety be expreſſed by the *Engliſh* word, the SWEARERS,† which, on the whole, makes an undeniable argument for a *divine plurality*.

THE ſtrength of this argument in favour of a *divine plurality*, will appear ſtill more conſpicuous, from the different forms of conſtruction in which the word ELOHIM is found in revelation. The manner of ſpeaking the ſeveral penmen have uſed, lead naturally into the notion of a *divine plurality*. This is moſt remarkable in *Moſes*, a great part of whoſe writings are evidently deſigned to guard againſt *polytheiſm*, or a *plurality of Gods*, which the *Jews*

† The genius of the *Hebrew* language is ſuch, that ſignificant words are always framed from roots which have ſome certain and fixed idea, and thereby convey a determinate meaning. The root *Elah*, means an *oath* or *adjuration*, an execration made to affect the breaker of a covenant. And as the ſingular admits of this meaning, *one* that hath taken upon him an oath, the plural, *Elohim*, muſt denote more than one under that obligation, or entering into covenant or agreement together.

This idea may ſeem ſtrange at firſt view, but it will become more familiar, if we conſider that on many occaſions in ſacred writ JEHOVAH is ſaid to *ſwear*,—to *ſwear* by himſelf for confirmation of future events, to create abſolute certainty, and reliance on his promiſe. And ſince JEHOVAH repreſents himſelf in this light, as binding himſelf by *oath* to the performance of his promiſes, it need not ſeem ſtrange, that he calls himſelf the *God bound by oath*, engaged by mutual obligation to fulfil his promiſes.

This plainly accounts for the ſcripture phraſeology of joining *relatives* to the term *Elohim*.—Why JEHOVAH deſcribes himſelf as the *Elohim* of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, &c. and why his people call him *my*, *thy*, *our*, *their* ELOHIM. And if JEHOVAH is pleaſed to repreſent himſelf under the obligation of a covenant, for the benefit of mankind; ſurely the addreſſing him under the term *Elohim*, denoting the notion of *Fœderatores*, muſt command their ſerious attention,—raiſe their moſt thankful ſentiments of his mercy and goodneſs,—ſtrengthen their confidence in his favour,—and at the ſame time, warn them of the great danger of tranſgreſſing his divine laws.

Jews were far too fond of: Yet his ſtile in manifold inſtances plainly conveys the idea of a *divine plurality*. The firſt appellation he gives to God, is plural, (*a*) "ELOHIM BARA," (GODS *created*); and in the ſhort hiſtory of the creation, repeats it about thirty times, beſides ſeveral hundred times more in his other writings.

IT need not be imagined, that it was for want of a *ſingular* name, that he was obliged to uſe this *plural*; he might have taken JEHOVAH, which has no *plural*, or ELOAH, the ſingular of ELOHIM, the laſt of which he uſes in ſome inſtances: But as he generally makes uſe of the plural ELOHIM, it certainly was to convey ſome idea of a *divine plurality*.†

AND tho' ELOHIM is in ſeveral texts joined with a ſingular verb, no doubt to guard againſt the notion of a plurality of GODS: Yet, it is many times in conſtruction with *verbs*, *adjectives*, and *participles*, *plural*. (*b*) "And it came to paſs, when the GODS (according to the ordinary tranſlation of ELOHIM) cauſed me to wander from my father's houſe.—(*c*) And he (*Jacob*) built there an altar, and called the place *El-Bethel*, becauſe there the GODS

(*a*) Gen. i. 1. (*b*) Gen. xx. 13. (*c*) ibid. xxxv. 7.

† Since ELOHIM has a ſingular, which is ſometimes uſed in ſcripture, it would be ſtrange in the ſacred writers, commonly to uſe the plural out of choice, and not of neceſſity, if there was not ſome particular inſtruction intended to be conveyed by it as a plural; and that a word more fit to miſlead than inform, ſhould be uſed by God in his written inſtructions to men.—ELOHIM is owned to be a plural by the *Jews*, who ſince their captivity in *Babylon*, have the idea of plurality in the greateſt contempt; and in their tranſlations make a very ridiculous diſtinction, by rendering the ſame ſpecific word in the ſingular, when they think it relates to the true God, and plural, when it relates to the idols which were the objects of the *Pagan* worſhip.

(ELOHIM) appeared to him. (*d*) What nation is there ſo great, that *have Gods* (ELOHIM) who *are* ſo near unto them? (*e*) What one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like *Iſrael*, whom the *Gods* (ELOHIM) ſent to redeem for a people to himſelf? (*f*) For who is there of all fleſh, that have heard the voice of the *living Gods* (ELOHIM) ſpeaking out of the midſt of the fire, and lived? (*g*) Ye have perverted the words of the *living Gods* (ELOHIM.) (*h*) But the Lord is the true GOD; he is the *living Gods* (ELOHIM.) (*i*) And *Joſhua* ſaid unto the people, ye cannot ſerve the LORD; for he is an holy *God*, (that is, the *holy* GODS (ELOHIM) is he.) (*k*) Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth. (*Gods*, ELOHIM, that judge.) To theſe might be added, that expreſſion ſo frequent in ſcripture, "The LORD thy GODS," (JEHOVAH ELOHEKA.)

THERE are ſeveral other *nouns* beſides ELOHIM, that are to be underſtood of the being of GOD, which, being expreſſed in the plural, muſt imply a *divine plurality*.—(*l*) "I neither learned wiſdom, nor have I the knowledge of the holy, (*holy ones*.) (*m*) Where is God my maker, (*makers*.) (*n*) If I be a maſter, (if I am *maſters*.) (*o*) Remember now thy creator, (*creators*.) (*p*) Let *Iſrael* rejoice in him that made him, (in his *makers*.) (*q*) For thy maker is thy huſband, the Lord of Hoſts is his name." Here both *maker* and *huſband* are plural.

THE plural expreſſions uſed in revelation by God, when ſpeaking of himſelf, do further prove a *divine*

(*d*) Deut. iv. 7. (*e*) 2 Sam. vii. 23. (*f*) Deut. v. 26. (*g*) Jer. xxiii. 26. (*h*) ibid. x. 10. (*i*) Joſ. xxiv. 19. (*k*) Pſa. lviii. 11. (*l*) Pro. xxx. 3. (*m*) Job xxxv. 10. (*n*) Mal. i. 6. (*o*) Eccl. xii. 1. (*p*) Pſa. cxlix. 2. (*q*) Iſa. liv. 5.

a *divine plurality*.—(*r*) And *God* (ELOHIM) ſaid, let *us* make man in OUR image, after OUR likeneſs. (*s*) And the LORD GOD ſaid, (JEHOVAH ELOHIM ſaid) behold the man is become like ONE OF US.† (*t*) And the Lord God ſaid, let *us* go down and there confound their language. (*u*) I heard the voice of the Lord, ſaying, whom ſhall I ſend, and who will go for US? (*v*) Produce your cauſe, ſaith the Lord? let them bring forth, and ſhew us what ſhall happen,—let them ſhew the former things, that we may conſider them, &c."

IF it is poſſible for language to convey the idea of *plurality*, theſe texts in the above pages certainly do it. And as they are all ſpoken of the *divine Being*, beyond contradiction, they prove a *divine plurality*. Such as deny it, will find it impoſſible upon any other plan, to reconcile the texts with common ſenſe, or ſhew what other idea can be formed from the plural expreſſions uſed in them.

INDEED, againſt the evidence of a *divine plurality*, from the laſt cited texts, it has been objected, by ſuch as are no friends to the doctrine, that it is only a *figurative* way of ſpeaking, taken from the cuſtom of kings in Eaſtern countries, who uſed to expreſs themſelves in the *plural*, to ſhew their dignity. THIS

(*r*) Gen. i. 26. (*s*) ibid. iii. 22. (*t*) ibid. xi. 6, 7. (*u*) Iſa. vi. 8. (*v*) ibid. xli. 22, 23.

† The expreſſion in this text is ſo diſtinct and unambiguous, as no force of figure or example can twiſt it to the *Jewiſh* conſtruction. *One of us*, neceſſarily implies more than one. The enemies to a *divine plurality* are terribly put about for a meaning to this text. They ſay JEHOVAH is ſpeaking to the *angels*, bringing them upon a level with himſelf. Although this did not imply an abſurdity, which it does, there is no reaſon to imagine he does ſo here, ſince he no where elſe in ſcripture does ſo, and the plural word ELOHIM immediately preceding, determines who the *us* were, and forbids the application of that pronoun to any other beings.

THIS objection is without foundation. For, can any one ſuppoſe that GOD would borrow his manner of ſpeaking from a *king*, before *any man was upon earth!* But if this, however abſurd, we ſhould grant to be poſſible, yet the objection is not to the purpoſe. For tho' a king may ſay US and WE, common ſenſe tells us, that there is not the leaſt propriety in ſaying ONE OF US, when he ſpeaks of himſelf; the phraſe is deſtitute of meaning, if there is not more than *one* ſuppoſed. Therefore, this manner of expreſſion, (*w*) "The LORD GOD ſaid, behold the man is become as ONE OF US," muſt either be void of ſenſe, or it muſt imply a *divine plurality*; the firſt, no chriſtian will alledge, if the latter be true; then all the other texts, as they are in a ſtile ſimilar to this, muſt be admitted as fair proofs of the ſame doctrine.

I might have illuſtrated this point, from a number of teſtimonies in revelation; but as the texts brought together in the next ſection, equally prove this point, with that which they are brought in vindication of, I ſhall only add here, a very few texts, to prove that this *divine plurality* (for ought we can learn to the contrary) in ſcripture, is limited to THREE.

(*x*) "HOLY, *holy*, *holy*, is the LORD *of hoſts*." (*y*) *John* applies this text to *Jeſus Chriſt*, and (*z*) *Paul* applies it to the *Holy Ghoſt*; from which, if the paſſages are carefully conſidered and compared, it will appear, that the *divine plurality* is intended by the repetition of the word *Holy* in the text, as well as by the ſame repetition of it in the (*a*) revelation to St *John*; and its being repeated juſt

ſo

(*w*) Gen. iii. 22. (*x*) Iſa. vi. 3. (*y*) John xii. 41. (*z*) Acts xxviii. 25. (*a*) Rev. iv. 8.

ſo often, and *no more*, in both places, ſeems to teach us, that the *plurality* implied in it is *limited to three*. (*b*) I will pray the FATHER, and he ſhall give you ANOTHER COMFORTER, that *He* may abide with you for ever: Even the SPIRIT OF TRUTH. (*c*) How much more ſhall the blood of CHRIST, who through the ETERNAL SPIRIT, offered himſelf without ſpot to GOD, purge your conſciences from dead works, to ſerve the living God? (*d*) The LORD direct your hearts unto the love of GOD, and the patient waiting for CHRIST." The *Spirit* is called the *Lord* here, as well as by (*e*) *Ezekiel*. (*f*) "Go and teach all nations, babtiſing them in the name of the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST. (*g*) There ARE THREE that bear record in heaven, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*. (*h*) The grace of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and the love of *God*, and the communion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, be with you all. *Amen*."

THIS point alſo, is not only manifeſt from the above texts, but from thoſe cited in the beginning of the next ſection. I ſhall not therefore enlarge upon it here: But before I proceed, I hope the reader will allow me a little to reaſon the caſe, upon their own principles, with ſuch as reject the doctrine I have been endeavouring to prove, becauſe they cannot comprehend and deſcribe the manner and reaſon of it.

THE greateſt difficulty concerning the Trinity is, that we cannot account upon philoſophic principles, how one ſimple infinite nature can act in three perſonal identities, with equal glory. But the

(*b*) John xiv. 16, 17. (*c*) Heb. ix. 14. (*d*) 2 Theſſo. iii. 5. (*e*) Ezek. viii. 1. 3. (*f*) Matt. xxviii. 19. (*g*) 1 John v. 7. (*h*) 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

the ground of this difficulty lies, in reaſoning from what we know of a nature that is finite and limited, to one that is infinite and incomprehenſible, and beyond the reach of definition. The nature of men is the ſame, yet perſonal identity is various, according to the number of individuals; and if human nature was *infinitely ſimple*, we do not know but one nature, and one power, might act in all the individuals. It is not inconſiſtent with any rule of reaſon, that a nature which is infinite and ſimple, may act in a plurality of diſtinct identities without diviſion. If it is infinitely ſimple, it cannot be divided, and if it is infinitely powerful, holy, juſt, and good, it is no abſurdity to ſay, it may act in diſtinct perſons, and be one according to the ſimplicity of nature. The word *nature*, when applied to God, muſt (according to the rules which revelation affords us to judge of that bleſſed Being) be underſtood in the moſt ſimple and abſolute ſenſe, removing from our thoughts, all the groſs ideas which our acquaintance with corporeal things ſuggeſt to our minds. If we can by reaſon conceive, that there is an immaterial and infinite nature, it is no way unreaſonable to ſuppoſe that nature capable to act quite beyond all the rules which we have learned from our obſervations of *limited* natures.

HOWEVER, it muſt be unreaſonable to reject the *divine teſtimony*, which affirms that God is *one*, and expreſſeth himſelf by a *plurality*, and in each claims the ſame honour, worſhip, and reverence, and aſſumes the ſame names and attributes; becauſe we cannot account for the manner of ſuch an union and diſtinction. We may conceive of the moſt difficult thing concerning the Trinity, as a *matter of revelation*, if it is affirmed therein, as well

as

as any other doctrine, *i. e.* we may conceive that God has informed us that it is true. But if by conceiving thereof be meant, that we ſhall know the manner and reaſons how it is true, that is quite another thing, and natively tends to profanity; the ſame as to ſay, we will not credit the Almighty, 'till we be as wiſe as himſelf; and that it is neceſſary for us to be Gods, before we believe that there is one. We can juſt as little conceive of the manner how God exiſts at all, as we can conceive how he exiſts in a plurality, and if we will not believe his exiſtence, 'till we know the manner of it, we muſt be *Atheiſts* for ever.

THERE are ſome who deny the doctrine of the Trinity, becauſe they cannot underſtand it, who yet pretend to know ſeveral things as difficult to underſtand; as for inſtance, that a creature made the world, and himſelf alſo. If *Jeſus Chriſt* made all things, which they dare not deny, ſince the Apoſtles have told us ſo often in ſo plain terms, and he himſelf be a creature as they affirm, then he is the maker of himſelf, which is as inconceivable as any point concerning the Trinity.

THAT the divine *three* are *one*, is demonſtrable from ſcripture, in as much as the divine attributes and perfections are aſcribed to the *three*, who, if poſſeſſed of divine perfections, muſt be poſſeſſed of the divine nature; for there is no ſeparating the divine nature and perfections; and as the divine nature is but *one*, conſequently they muſt be *one God*.

I do not pretend to prove from reaſon, that God is *three* and *one*, this would be fooliſh; for no man can prove a *priori*, that ſuch a thing muſt be in God.

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It muſt be proved from revelation, and if it is found there, every man that owns revelation is divine, is obliged to acquieſce in what God ſays of himſelf, unleſs he is ſo preſumptive as to pretend to know the infinite Being better than he does himſelf.

NOR do I pretend to tell *how*, and in what reſpects God is *three* and *one*. The beſt anſwer I ſuppoſe that could be given to this queſtion is, that God has not revealed it, and therefore no man can tell. Words have been uſed, and we are obliged to uſe them ſtill, to expreſs this matter, not ſo much for their propriety to the ſubject, as for want of better, and for the ſake of diſcourſe; as that there are three, commonly called *perſons*, in one *eſſence* or nature. But, we have no notion of *Perſon* or *Eſſence* as to God, and ſo no notion of either *Trinity* or *Unity* in this ſenſe. Notwithſtanding, we muſt not refuſe, on this or any other account, our aſſent to what God aſſures us is true, as to the reality of the thing itſelf, tho' not in the words which men have deviſed to expreſs it in. Should we do this, we might with equal propriety deny that God made the world, for we cannot tell *how* he created all things of nothing: Nor can we tell *how* God is immenſe without extenſion, or eternal without ſucceſſion, or growing older. *How* ſpirits work on bodies,—nor *how* our ſouls are united to our bodies? Yet to deny all theſe, and many other things which we know are real, tho' we cannot comprehend or deſcribe the manner or reaſon of them, were to commence ſceptics, or rather mad men. God may oblige us to believe the exiſtence of this or that thing, and give us no account *how*, or in what manner it does exiſt. If God tell us that *Jeſus Chriſt* is God and man,

man, in a true and proper ſenſe, we are to believe the reality of it as a truth, tho' he tells us not the manner, or wherein the unity conſiſts. We are not told that he is God and man, in the ſame reſpect, but that he is God and man, tho' in different reſpects, which is no contradiction, and therefore *reaſon itſelf muſt be ſatisfied.*

THERE are ſome who pretend to found their ſcheme of religion upon reaſon, and maintain that nothing is to be admitted but what they can aſſign a reaſon for: Or rather what agrees with the ideas they have formed for themſelves. The *humble* chriſtian agrees with them as far as right reaſon goes; but believes that there are things of which he neither has, nor can have adequate ideas: That ſome things may be true, tho' he does not juſtly know *how* or *why* they are ſo; and for the truth of ſuch things as do not depend upon reaſon, or fall within his knowledge and inveſtigation, he muſt depend upon ſuch evidence, as is ſufficient to induce the belief of any matter of fact.

WHEN we conſider how little we know of *matter*, which we ſee, feel, and taſte, and on which ſo many experiments have been tried by the wit of the greateſt geniuſes, which have been certainly believed for ſome time, but denied and ſucceeded by others: How little we know of the *mechaniſm* of ourſelves, or the ſyſtem we are in: And how much leſs of the nature of our own ſouls, or of any other ſpirit, except the little we feel tranſacting in us. When we farther reflect, how infinitely above our comprehenſion the *Deity* muſt be; can we view without aſtoniſhment, the preſumption of

thoſe men, who, by their knowledge, would define the nature and manner of exiſtence of the incomprehenſible Deity,—peremptorily decide what God is, or what he is not, and make their definitions the teſt and ſtandard to others of divine things.

HENCE, the doctrine of the Trinity is rejected by many, becauſe of the difficulty of comprehending the *how* and *wherefore* in it, as commonly expreſſed in the ſyſtems, which carry ſome more than the appearance of contradiction in the terms, and make no ſmall difficulty to conceive what is meant to be believed. But this apparent or real contradiction, is not owing to the revelation of that doctrine, from which the knowledge of it ſhould be taken; but to the folly and vanity of church *Doctors*, who, puffed with too great an opinion of their own parts, would pretend to define what revelation does not; and coin terms not uſed in ſcripture, to expreſs their imperfect conceptions. To theſe terms, and the application of them, the difficulty of believing the doctrine is chiefly owing. But on this, I ſhall ſay no more in this place, as I ſhall have occaſion more particularly to handle it afterwards.

SECT.

SECT. III.

HAVING ſhewed from ſcripture evidence, that there is but ONE GOD—That there is a DIVINE PLURALITY;—and ſo far as we can underſtand the ſcope and meaning of many paſſages in revelation, the *plurality* ſo plainly taught, is *limited* to THREE. I now come to the next thing propoſed for this *firſt* part, which was to ſhew, that to *each* of the *divine three*, is aſcribed in revelation the NAMES and PERFECTIONS proper *only* TO GOD. Or, that the NAMES, PERFECTIONS, WORKS, AND WORSHIP, *proper only to Deity, are common to the* THREE who are ONE.

BUT as no profeſſed chriſtian calls in queſtion the proper *Deity* of the *Father*, it would anſwer no valuable end, to ſpend time in uſing arguments to prove it. The proper *Deity* of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, I ſhall endeavour to prove:

Firſt, By a collection of ſcripture texts, in which the *names*, *attributes*, *perfections*, and *works*, that are proper only to *ſupreme Deity*, are aſcribed to the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and to the *Holy Ghoſt*.

Secondly, By comparing one text with another, and deducing the neceſſary concluſions for the demonſtration of that truth.

Thirdly, I ſhall prove the *proper Deity* of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, by ſome more general arguments, taken from the ſcope of ſome parts of ſcripture which have a relation to that ſubject.

FOR the *firſt* of theſe, I hope the reader will impartially conſider the following texts.

THE *Supreme Being* is diſtinguiſhed in revelation from all creatures, by the name JEHOVAH. (*a*) "Thou, whoſe *name alone* is JEHOVAH, art the *moſt high* over all the earth. (*b*) *Thou*, even *thou*, art LORD (JEHOVAH) *alone*."

THE *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* is called JEHOVAH. (*c*) "This is the *name* whereby *He* ſhall be called, the LORD our righteouſneſs." Rather as in the margin, JEHOVAH TSIDKENU.

THE *Holy Ghoſt* is called JEHOVAH. (*d*) "The LORD (JEHOVAH) took me, and the SPIRIT lift me up. (*e*) The SPIRIT of the LORD (the SPIRIT JEHOVAH) came upon *Sampſon*,—the LORD (JEHOVAH) departed from him. (*f*) The SPIRIT of the LORD (the SPIRIT JEHOVAH) is upon me, for the LORD (JEHOVAH) hath anointed me, &c."

THE name LORD in an abſolute ſenſe in the New Teſtament, is proper only to *Deity*. (*g*) "The ſame LORD over all, is rich unto all that call upon him."

THIS is given to *Jeſus Chriſt*. (*h*) "For unto you is born this day, in the city of *David*, a *Saviour*, who is *Chriſt* the LORD."

(*i*) "NOW the LORD is that ſpirit.—We are changed

(*a*) Pſa. lxxxiii. 18. (*b*) Neh. ix. 6. (*c*) Jer. xxiii. 6. (*d*) Ezek. viii. 1. 3. (*e*) Judg. xv. 14.—ibid. xvi. 20. (*f*) Iſa. lxi. 1. (*g*) Romans x. 12. (*h*) Luke ii. 11. (*i*) 2 Corin. iii. 17, 18.

changed from glory to glory, as by the LORD, the ſpirit." *Margin.* ‡

—— To the *Spirit*. (*k*) "For who hath known the mind of the LORD? (*l*) Who hath directed the SPIRIT?"

THE name GOD, in a proper ſenſe, belongs only

(*k*) Rom. xi. 3, 4. (*l*) Iſa. xl. 13.

‡ Some readers will be ſurpriſed that I apply this text to *Jeſus Chriſt*, which has been univerſally applied to the *Holy Ghoſt*, and reckoned by the orthodox on the Trinity, an inconteſtable proof of his Deity; whereas, it is plain from the ſcope, that the *Holy Ghoſt* is not intended by the term *Spirit*, in any part of the chapter; nor ſhould it be underſtood perſonally, as is commonly ſuppoſed. From the 6th verſe, the Apoſtle ſhews the excellency of the New Teſtament diſpenſation, which he calls the *Spirit* that giveth life, above the Moſaic diſpenſation, which he calls the *Letter* that killeth. To thoſe who looked no further than the outſide, or the external part of that diſpenſation, without regard to the *Spirit*, intent, and goſpel ſignification thereof, it was *death*—"circumciſion is that of the heart, in the *Spirit*, and not in the *Letter*." The law, without *Chriſt*, who is the end of it for righteouſneſs to them that believe, is *death*, a killing *Letter*: But the *law* of the *ſpirit of life, in Chriſt Jeſus*, makes free from the law of ſin and death. The ſpirit of life—the ſpirit that quickeneth, is the truth concerning *Chriſt*, who is the ſubſtance of the whole Moſaic diſpenſation, which the Apoſtle calls *figures*, *ſhadows*, &c. But the ſubſtance is *Chriſt*, the laſt *Adam*, who is a quickening Spirit. After he had compared the *letter* with the *Spirit*, he tells the *Corinthians*, "Now the *Lord* is that *Spirit*: And where the *Spirit*, the *Lord* is, (there is no poſſeſſive in the text) there is liberty." And who the *Lord* is, he tells them immediately after, "We preach *Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord*." He ſpeaks of the Moſaic œconomy, as under a veil, which made it difficult to look to the *end* of that which is aboliſhed: "But we (under the New Teſtament) all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs, the glory of the *Lord (Jeſus Chriſt)* are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, by the *Lord, the Spirit*." Tho' the ceremonial diſpenſation, eſtabliſhed at *Sinai*, had much outward pomp, yet it had "*no glory*," that is, very little in compariſon of the "*glory that excelleth*," in the new diſpenſation, wherein *Chriſt* in all his fullneſs is revealed in more clear, powerful, and extenſive manner, as the *Spirit* of the old, and the *Lord* of the new diſpenſation, in the moſt proper and ſpiritual ſenſe, therefore with the greateſt propriety called, "the *Spirit, the Lord*, and the *Lord, the Spirit*."

only to Deity. (*m*) "Thou ſhalt have no other GODS before me. (*n*) Thus ſaith the Lord, *beſides me* there is no GOD. (*o*) For there is *one* GOD, and there is *none other but he*. (*p*) There is none other GOD but *one*.—But to us there is but *one* GOD."

THIS name is often given to *Jeſus Chriſt*. (*q*) "And *Thomas* anſwered and ſaid unto HIM (*Jeſus*) *my Lord, and my* GOD. And the *Word* was GOD. (*r*) GOD was manifeſt in the *fleſh*. (*s*) But unto the *Son*, he ſaith, thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever. (*t*) For unto us a *Child* is *born*, unto us a *Son* is given, and the government ſhall be upon *His* ſhoulders: And his name ſhall be called, wonderful counſellor, the MIGHTY GOD. (*u*) Whoſe are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the fleſh CHRIST came, *who* is *over all*, GOD, *bleſſed for ever*. Amen. * (*v*) And we are in him that is true, even in his *Son*, *Jeſus Chriſt*. *This* is the *true God*, and

(*m*) Exo. xx. 3. (*n*) Iſa. xliv. 6. (*o*) Mark xii. 23. (*p*) 1 Cor. viii. 4, 6. (*q*) John xx. 28. ibid. i. 1. (*r*) 1 Tim. iii. 16. (*s*) Heb. i. 8. (*t*) Iſa. ix. 6. (*u*) Rom. ix. 5. (*v*) 1 John v. 20.

* This is ſo plain a proof of the proper Deity of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, that one muſt be ſurpriſed, how any can impoſe ſo much upon reaſon and common ſenſe as to deny it, by ſaying, that it is not *Jeſus Chriſt* that is here intended, but God the Father, mentioned (as they ſay) in the foregoing verſe; whereas nothing is ſaid of the Father, from the beginning of the chapter; nor the word God ſo much as mentioned. Indeed, the tranſlators have ſupplied the word God in the context, but it is of no manner of uſe, which any one may plainly ſee at firſt reading the paſſage. The Apoſtle is pointing out the great privileges of his countrymen, to whom, ſays he, pertained the adoption—the glory—the covenants—giving of the law—the ſervice—the promiſes.—And then adds, as the moſt diſtinguiſhing privilege,—"*of whom as concerning the fleſh* CHRIST *came*, WHO *is over all*, GOD, *bleſſed for ever*. *Amen*. It is not common ſenſe to ſay, the relative *who* refers to any but Chriſt mentioned immediately before; for there is not another, that with the leaſt propriety, it can refer to.

and *eternal life*. (*w*) For this is good and acceptable in the ſight of GOD our SAVIOUR. (*x*) According to the commandment of GOD our SAVIOUR. (*y*) That they may adorn the doctrine of GOD *our* SAVIOUR in all things. (*z*) After that the kindneſs and love of GOD *our* SAVIOUR appeared. (*a*) Looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the GREAT GOD and (*even*) our LORD JESUS CHRIST. (*b*) *Paul*, an Apoſtle of *Jeſus Chriſt*, by the commandment of GOD our *Saviour*, and (*even*) the LORD JESUS CHRIST our hope. (*c*) *Simon Peter*, a ſervant, and an Apoſtle of *Jeſus Chriſt*, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteouſneſs of GOD, and (*even*) our *Saviour* JESUS CHRIST. (*d*) And denying the ONLY TRUE GOD, and (*even*) our Lord Jeſus Chriſt." †

(*w*) 1 Tim. ii. 3. (*x*) Tit. i. 3. (*y*) ibid. ii. 10. (*z*) ibid. iii. 4. (*a*) ibid. ii. 13. (*b*) 1 Tim. i. 1. (*c*) 2 Pet. i. 1. (*d*) Jude 4.

† In the four laſt cited texts, as well as in ſeveral others, where our tranſlators have given us the *copulative* AND, it could be wiſhed they had uſed another word inſtead thereof, both nearer the original, and more favourable to the *Deity* of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. In the texts which I have cited, before theſe four, the Apoſtles apply the title GOD to our Lord Jeſus, the *Saviour*, without any copulative to diſtinguiſh them, ſo that none can doubt it is *Jeſus Chriſt* they mean. And even in theſe texts, where the terms *God* and *Jeſus Chriſt* are ſo diſtinguiſhed as in our tranſlation, there is enough to convince any one that ſhall conſider the texts impartially, that it is the ſame divine perſon who is meant.

It is not the *Father*, but *Jeſus Chriſt*, who the ſcriptures ſay ſhall make the *glorious appearance* at the laſt day. The word tranſlated, *appearing* in the firſt of the four texts, is other five times uſed in the New Teſtament, and always applied to *Jeſus Chriſt*; Whereas the *Father* is always conſidered as inviſible. Beſides, *Chriſt* is emphatically called the *hope* of his ſaints; which two words being joined together in the text, limits the term *Great God* to *Jeſus Chriſt*, whoſe appearing the ſaints hope and long for,—and who (ſays the Apoſtle in the very next verſe) "Gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." This puts it beyond diſpute, that *Jeſus Chriſt* is called the *Great God*, and not the *Father*, as is commonly ſuppoſed, and which inattentive readers may eaſily be led to think, from the word *and* being put betwixt

THE Holy Ghoſt is alſo called GOD. (e) "But *Peter* ſaid, *Ananias*, why hath *Satan* filled thine heart to lie to the HOLY GHOST? Thou haſt not lied

(e) Acts v. 4, 3.

twixt *Great God* and *Jeſus Chriſt*, which would point out *two*, whereas there is but *one* intended in the text.

The ſame Greek word Και, which is here rendered *and*, is in many other places, by the ſame tranſlators, rendered *even*. Rom. viii. 23. "And not only they, but ourſelves alſo, which have the firſt fruits of the Spirit, EVEN we ourſelves, &c. 1 Cor. xv. 24. He ſhall have delivered up the kingdom to God, EVEN the Father. 2 Cor. i. 3. Bleſſed be God, EVEN the Father, &c. 2 Cor. x. 12. Which God hath diſtributed to us, a meaſure to reach EVEN to you." Had Και been rendered *and* in theſe and other texts, it would have made them wholly unintelligible; and there is no reaſon why it ſhould be ſo here, if it is not to favour an argument againſt the Deity of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in the hands of ſuch as are no friends to that doctrine.

By conſidering the other three texts, we will ſee equal reaſon to conclude, that *God* and *Jeſus Chriſt* ought not to be diſtinguiſhed as they are. At *whoſe commandment* did *Paul* become an Apoſtle? Through *whoſe righteouſneſs* do we obtain ſalvation? And *who* does *Jude* ſay the ſcoffers of his time denied? Not that there was a *God*,—which muſt be the ſenſe, if the copulative be admitted; but they denied the truths taught by the Apoſtles, concerning the character and kingdom of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Now, ſince the things predicated in the texts, are conſtantly applied to *Jeſus Chriſt* in other ſcriptures, what reaſon can be aſſigned, why the Apoſtles ſhould apply them to any *other*, in theſe texts under conſideration.

Beſides, admitting the copulative *and* in theſe and other texts conveys a very ſtrange idea of what is predicated of the *Great God* and *Jeſus Chriſt*, as if there were *one* appearing of the *Great God*, another of *Jeſus Chriſt*—*One* commandment of the *Great God* to make *Paul* an Apoſtle, another of *Jeſus Chriſt*.—*One* righteouſneſs of *God*, another of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and ſo of all the texts where it is found. Whereas the appearing, commandment, righteouſneſs, denying, &c. mentioned in the texts, is but *one* appearing, &c. therefore it muſt be one and the ſame ſubject or perſon they are predicated of.

Such conſiderations kept in view, in reading many paſſages of the New Teſtament, would make the ſcope and meaning of them abundantly more clear; and ſet the proper Deity of *Jeſus Chriſt* in the plaineſt point of view that language can poſſibly expreſs it: But otherwiſe, the texts are either preſſed as arguments againſt the Deity of *Chriſt*, or at leaſt, ſubject to the criticiſms of ſuch as are no friends to it.

lied unto *men*, but unto GOD.‡ (*f*) All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of GOD. (*g*) But holy men of *God* ſpake as they were moved by the HOLY GHOST. (*h*) Know ye not, that ye are the temple of GOD, and that the SPIRIT of *God* dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of GOD, him ſhall *God* deſtroy; for the temple of GOD is holy, which temple ye are. (*i*) Know ye not, that your body is the temple of the HOLY GHOST?"

CREATION WORK is proper only to GOD. (*k*) "The LORD he is GOD, it is he that made us. (*l*) Thou, even thou, art LORD *alone*, thou haſt made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hoſt, the earth, and all things that are therein, the ſeas, and all that is therein. (*m*) *He that built all things is* GOD."

BUT CREATION WORK is aſcribed to JESUS CHRIST. (*n*) "All things were made by him (the Word); and without *him* was not *any thing made* that was made. (*o*) By *him* (JESUS CHRIST) were all things *created* that are in heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things

E were

(*f*) 2 Tim. iii. 16. (*g*) 2 Pet. i. 21. (*h*) 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. (*i*) ibid. vi. 19. (*k*) Pſa. c. 3. (*l*) Neh. ix. 6. (*m*) Heb. iii. 4. (*n*) John i. 3. (*o*) Col. i. 16, 17.

‡ The antitheſis is here betwixt *man* and *God*;—and *Ananias* lied unto *God*, becauſe he had lied unto the *Holy Ghoſt*; who, by the plaineſt inference, (if the Apoſtle ſpoke good ſenſe) is therefore *God*. Had it not been thus, the Apoſtle would have ſaid, "Thou haſt not lied unto the *Holy Ghoſt*, or, to the *Holy Ghoſt only, but unto God*." If the Holy Ghoſt is *not God*, the Apoſtle is certainly culpable for writing ſo uncautiouſly; for any man of common ſenſe, whoſe mind is not prejudiced, and reads only to know the truth, muſt neceſſarily conclude from this and other texts, that the Holy Ghoſt is *God*. To interpret them otherwiſe, needs a great deal of criticiſm and learned pains, and after all, the interpretations appear to the unprejudiced very unnatural and forced.

were *created by him and for him.* And *he* is before all things, and by *him* all things *conſiſt.*"

—— AND to the *Spirit.*—(*p*) "The SPIRIT of GOD (* the SPIRIT GOD) hath *made me*, and the breath of the Almighty hath *given me life.*"

THE *Author of divine revelation, is* GOD. (*q*) "GOD ſhall *reveal* even this unto you. (*r*) GOD,—who *ſpake* in time paſt unto the fathers, by the prophets. (*s*) *Thus ſaith* the LORD of Hoſts."

BUT this is attributed to *Jeſus Chriſt.*—(*t*) "For I neither received it of men, neither was I taught it, but by the *revelation* of JESUS CHRIST. (*u*) Since ye ſeek a proof of CHRIST *ſpeaking* in me, which to you ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. (*v*) *Theſe things ſaith the* SON OF GOD."

——AND to the *Holy Ghoſt.*—(*w*) "It was *revealed* unto him by the HOLY GHOST. (*x*) It is not ye that *ſpeak*, but the HOLY GHOST. (*y*) *Thus ſaith the* HOLY GHOST."

THE *divine law* hath its *authority from* GOD. They who break it *tempt* GOD.—(*z*) "So then with the mind, I myſelf ſerve the *law of* GOD. (*) There is *one law-giver*, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy. (*a*) Ye ſhall not tempt the *Lord* your *God.*"

THE

(*p*) Job xxxiii. 4. (*q*) Phil. iii. 15. (*r*) Heb. i. 1. (*s*) Iſa. i. 24. (*t*) Gal. i 12. (*u*) 2 Cor. xiii. 3. (*v*) Rev. ii. 18. (*w*) Luke ii. 26. (*x*) Mark xiii. 3. (*y*) Acts xxi. 11. (*z*) Rom. vii. 25. (*) Sam. iv. 12. (*a*) Deut. vi. 16.

* In this text, as well as ſeveral others, (which we will have occaſion to notice afterwards) there is no poſſeſſive pronoun to denote a relation to any other; which makes it a clear proof that the *ſpirit is God*; and that creation work is properly aſcribed to him.

THE ſame is ſaid of *Chriſt*.—(*b*) "Bear ye one another's burthens, and ſo fulfil the *law of Chriſt*. (*c*) Neither let us *tempt Chriſt*, as ſome of them alſo tempted, and were deſtroyed of ſerpents."

——— OF the *Spirit*.—(*d*) The *law* of the *ſpirit of life* in *Chriſt Jeſus*, hath made me free from the law of ſin and death. (*e*) How is it that ye have agreed together, to *tempt* the *ſpirit of God*?"

ETERNITY is a perfection proper *only* to *God*.—(*f*) "Even from everlaſting to everlaſting, thou art *God*. (*g*) The *eternal God* is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlaſting arms."

——— Attributed to *Jeſus Chriſt*.—(*h*) "Unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon is given,—and his *name* ſhall be called—the *everlaſting Father*, (the *father of eternity*.) (*i*) I (the redeemer) am the *firſt*, and I *am the laſt*. (*k*) I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *ending*. (*l*) *Jeſus Chriſt*, the *ſame yeſterday*, and *to-day*, and *for ever*."

——— To the *Spirit*.—(*m*) "How much more ſhall the blood of *Chriſt*, who through the *eternal Spirit* offered himſelf without ſpot unto *God*."

IMMENSITY is another perfection proper only to *Deity*.—(*n*) "Can any hide himſelf in ſecret places, that I ſhall not ſee him? ſaith the *Lord*: Do not I fill heaven and earth? ſaith the *Lord*."

THIS

(*b*) Gal. vi. 2. (*c*) 1 Cor. x. 9. (*d*) Rom. viii. 2. (*e*) Acts v. 9. (*f*) Pſa. xc. 2. (*g*) Deut. xxxiii. 27. (*h*) Iſa. ix. 6. (*i*) ibid. xliv. 6. (*k*) Rev. i. 8, and 22, 13. (*l*) Heb. xiii. 8. (*m*) ibid. ix. 14. (*n*) Jer. xxiii. 24.

THIS is alſo attributed to *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is —(o) "head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullneſs of him (*Chriſt*) that *filleth all in all*."

——— To the *Spirit*.—(p) "Whither ſhall I go from thy *Spirit*? Or whither ſhall I fly from thy preſence? If I aſcend up into heaven, *thou* art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, *thou* art there, &c."

HE that is *preſent* with all the ſaints, and *dwelleth in them*, is *God*. (q) "Ye are the temple of the *living God*; as *God* hath ſaid, I will *dwell in them*. (r) *God* is *in you* of a truth."

BUT *Jeſus Chriſt dwelleth in them*.—(s) "Know ye not your ownſelves, how that *Jeſus Chriſt is in you*, except ye be reprobates? (t) That *Chriſt* may dwell in your hearts by faith."

——— To the *Spirit*.—(u) "Even the *Spirit of truth*, he *dwelleth* with you, and ſhall be *in you*. (v) But if the *ſpirit* of him that raiſed up *Jeſus* from the dead, *dwell in you*: He that raiſed up *Chriſt* from the dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal bodies, by his *ſpirit* that *dwelleth in you*."

——— GOD *only is holy*.—(w) "Who ſhall not fear thee, O *Lord*, and glorify thy name? for *thou only art holy*.

——— THIS perfection is aſcribed to *Jeſus Chriſt*.

(o) Eph. i. 22, 23. (p) Pſa. cxxxix. 7, 8. (q) 2 Cor. vi. 16. (r) 1 Cor. xiv. 15. (s) 2 Cor. xiii. 5. (t) Eph. iii. 17. (u) John xiv. 17. (v) Rom. viii. 11. (w) Rev. xv. 4.

Chriſt.—(*x*) "But ye denied the *holy one*, and the juſt. (*y*) Theſe things, ſaith *he* that is *holy*, he that is true." Even *Jeſus Chriſt* who indited the epiſtles to the ſeven churches.

——— AND to the *Holy Ghoſt*.—(*z*) "But ye have an unction from the *holy one*, and ye know all things."

GOD only is the *fountain of life*.—(*a*) "That thou may'ſt love the *Lord* thy *God*—for he is thy *life*. (*b*) The Father raiſeth up the dead, and quickeneth them."

THIS is attributed to *Jeſus Chriſt*.—(*c*) "When *Chriſt* who is our *life*, ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in glory. (*d*) Even ſo, the *Son quickeneth* whom *he will*. (*e*) But ye denied the holy one, and the juſt,—and killed the *prince* (margin, *author*) *of life*."

——— AND to the *Spirit*.—(*f*) "The body is dead, becauſe of ſin; but the *ſpirit is life*, becauſe of righteouſneſs. But if the *Spirit* of him that raiſed up *Jeſus* from the dead, dwell in you; he that raiſed up *Chriſt* from the dead, ſhall alſo *quicken* your mortal bodies, by his *ſpirit* that dwelleth in you. (*g*) It is the *Spirit* that *quickeneth*." †

GOD only is poſſeſſed of abſolute unlimited *power*.

(*x*) Acts iii. 14. (*y*) Rev. iii. 7. (*z*) 1 John ii. 20. (*a*) Deut. xxx. 20. (*b*) John v. 21. (*c*) Col. iii. 4. (*d*) John v. 21. (*e*) Acts ii. 14, 15. (*f*) Rom. viii. 10, 11. (*g*) John vi. 63.

† If by the term *Spirit*, in any of theſe texts, be meant the *truth* rather than the *Holy Ghoſt*, (ſee Note, p. 29) this will by no means weaken the evidence in favour of his divinity, ſo manifeſt in many other texts, where he is clearly meant.

power. He only can *raiſe the dead*.—(*h*) "Power belongeth to *God*. (*i*) Thou haſt made the heavens and the earth by thy *great power*; and there is nothing too hard for thee. (*k*) *God* hath both *raiſed up* the *Lord*, and will alſo *raiſe us up* by his *own power*."

——— Attributed to *Jeſus Chriſt*.—(*l*) "Moſt gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the *power* of *Chriſt* may reſt upon me. (*m*) Deſtroy this temple, and in three days *I will raiſe it up*. But he ſpake of the temple of his body."

——— To the *Spirit*.—(*n*) "To make the *Gentiles* obedient by word and deed, through *mighty ſigns* and *wonders*, by the *power* of the *Spirit* of *God*. (*o*) *Chriſt* being put to death in the fleſh, but *quickened by the Spirit*."

ALL *ſpiritual* and *divine operations* muſt be *from God*.—(*p*) "There are diverſities of operations, but it is the *ſame God*, that *worketh all in all*."

THE Apoſtle ſaith,—(*q*) "But *Chriſt is all in all*." And adds, (*r*) "But all theſe worketh that *one* and *ſelf-ſame Spirit*, dividing to every man ſeverally as *he will*."

FROM theſe, and many others, that might have been collected, it is plain from *ſcripture teſtimony alone*, that the ſame *attributes*, *perfections*, *and works*, which are proper *only to Deity*, are aſcribed to the *Lord*

(*h*) Pſa. lxii. 11. (*i*) Jer. xxxii. 17. (*k*) 1 Cor. vi. 14. (*l*) 2 Cor. xii. 9. (*m*) John ii. 19, 21. (*n*) Rom. xv. 18, 19. (*o*) 1 Pet. iii. 18. (*p*) 1 Cor. xii. 6. (*q*) Col. iii. 11. (*r*) 1 Cor. xii. 11.

Lord Jeſus Chriſt and the *Holy Ghoſt*. And as the evidence is in ſcripture language, (without comment) and ſo not liable to the weakneſs or miſapplication that often attends evidence, which depends upon human conſequences, drawn from ſcripture by men; I do not imagine, how it is poſſible to avoid the force of ſo neceſſary a concluſion from them, as, that *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, are *truly* and *neceſſarily God*.

IT may be obſerved here, as I hinted above, that theſe texts thus collected, do not only prove the proper Deity of the *Lord Jeſus*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, but alſo clearly point out the truth of a *divine plurality*, and not obſcurely that it is limited to *three*. And as the ſcriptures ſo copiouſly aſcribe divine *names*, *perfections*, and *works* to a *plurality*, and yet peremptorily, and in the cleareſt terms aſſert, that there is but *one God*, that is one divine Being, poſſeſſed of theſe *names* and *perfections*, and no where give the leaſt hint concerning the *manner* of this plurality and *unity*, or how the divine *three* are *one*: It becomes all chriſtians to check the firſt emotions of curious inquiry into what is not revealed concerning this ſubject. That theſe *three* are *one* we know, becauſe revealed, but *how*, we know not.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

BUT as it was propoſed in the beginning of the laſt ſection, to prove the *Deity* of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, by comparing one text with another, and deducing the neceſſary concluſions, I ſhall make that the ſubject of this ſection; and *firſt* begin with theſe arguments of this kind, which prove the *proper Deity* of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*.

ISAIAH ſaith,—(*s*) "Mine eyes have ſeen the *King*, the LORD OF HOSTS." *John* ſays, this was CHRIST whom *Iſaiah* here ſpeaks of.—(*t*) "Theſe things, ſaid *Eſaias*, when he ſaw HIS *glory*, and ſpake of HIM." Therefore JESUS CHRIST is the LORD OF HOSTS.

(*u*) "THUS ſaith the LORD (JEHOVAH) the *king of Iſrael*, and his redeemer (GOAL) the LORD OF HOSTS, I am the *firſt*, and I am the *laſt*, and beſide me there is no GOD." He who is the *redeemer* (GOAL) the *firſt* and the *laſt*, is JEHOVAH, the LORD OF HOSTS, beſide whom there is no GOD: But JESUS CHRIST is the *redeemer*,—(*v*) "In whom we have *redemption* through his blood." And the titles *firſt* and *laſt* he takes to himſelf.—(*w*) "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *end*, the *firſt* and the *laſt*." Therefore he is JEHOVAH, the LORD OF HOSTS, *and beſide him* there is no GOD.

(*x*) "I am JEHOVAH, and beſide me there is no Saviour." But *Jeſus Chriſt* is the *Saviour*.—(*y*) "Grow

(*s*) Iſa. vi. 5. (*t*) John xii. 41. (*u*) Iſa. xliv. 6. (*v*) Eph. i. 7. (*w*) Rev. xxii. 13. (*x*) Iſa. xliii. 11. (*y*) 2 Pet. iii. 18.

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our *Lord* and *Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*" Therefore *Jeſus Chriſt* is JEHOVAH.

(*z*) "SANCTIFY the LORD OF HOSTS *himſelf*, and let *him* be your *fear* and your *dread*. He ſhall be for a *ſanctuary*, and for a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and for a *rock* of *offence* to both the houſes of *Iſrael.*" *He* who was to be a ſtumbling ſtone, and a rock of offence, *Iſaiah* calls the LORD OF HOSTS, and bids the children of *Iſrael ſanctify* (*honour*, *worſhip*, and *magnify*) *him*, and make *him* their *fear* and *dread*. *Fear* is here put for the *object* of fear, which is GOD; but the Apoſtles *Paul* and *Peter*, apply this expreſsly to CHRIST. (*a*) "They ſtumbled at the *ſtumbling ſtone*; as it is written, behold, I lay in *Zion*, a *ſtumbling ſtone*, and *rock of offence*; and whoſoever believeth in *him* (*Chriſt*) ſhall not be aſhamed. (*b*) Unto you therefore who believe *he* (*Jeſus Chriſt*) is precious; (an *honour*, as in the margin) but unto them who are diſobedient, the *ſtone* which the builders diſallowed, the ſame is made the head of the corner, and a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and a *rock of offence* to them who ſtumble at the word." Therefore JESUS CHRIST is the LORD OF HOSTS—is to be *ſanctified*, (*worſhipped* and *magnified*) and is the *true object* of *religious fear* and *reverence*.

THAT glorious and magnificent deſcription in the ninety-ſeventh Pſalm, is of one, who in ſeveral parts of it is called (*c*) JEHOVAH,—and *worſhip* commanded to be given to *him*. (*d*) "Worſhip him all ye Gods." But the Apoſtle (*e*) ſays, it was the SON OF GOD who is ſpoken of in that

(*z*) Iſa. viii. 13, 14. (*a*) Rom. ix. 32, 33. (*b*) 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8. (*c*) ver. 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12. (*d*) ver. 7. (*e*) Heb. i. 6.

ſacred hymn: Therefore *he* is JEHOVAH, *to whom divine worſhip* is due, and *of whom* the glorious things in that Pſalm are ſaid, proper to none but the *true God*.

ANOTHER majeſtic deſcription we have in the hundred and ſecond Pſalm, where ſeveral divine aſcriptions are given to JEHOVAH, which cannot with any propriety be applied to *any other*,—as *divine worſhip*—*eternity*—*infinite power*—and *unchangeableneſs*. (*f*) "But thou, LORD, (JEHOVAH) ſhalt *endure for ever*, and thy remembrance unto *all generations*. The heathen ſhall *fear* the *name* of the LORD, (JEHOVAH) and all the kings of the earth *thy glory*. Of old haſt *thou* laid the foundations of the earth: And the heavens are the work of *thy hands*. They ſhall periſh, but *thou ſhalt endure*: Yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a garment; as a veſture ſhalt *thou* change them, and they ſhall be changed. But *thou art the ſame*, and *thy years ſhall have no end*." But the Apoſtle giving the character of CHRIST to the *Hebrews* (*g*) tranſcribes theſe verſes, and applies the contents of them to *him*: Therefore, after the Apoſtle, we may ſafely conclude, that the *name* JEHOVAH, with all the *perfections* attributed to *him* in that Pſalm, are properly applicable to our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

(*h*) "The LORD (JEHOVAH) is my *ſhepherd*." The Pſalmiſt ſays, his *ſhepherd* is JEHOVAH: But JESUS CHRIST affirms of himſelf, that *he* is the *ſhepherd*;—(*i*) "I am the good *ſhepherd*: The good *ſhepherd* giveth his *life* for the ſheep." Therefore JESUS CHRIST is JEHOVAH. Here it may be proper

(*f*) ver. 12, 15, 25, 26, 27. (*g*) Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. (*h*) Pſa. xxiii. 1. (*i*) John x. 11.

proper to add, that *Chriſt* calls the church his (*k*) *ſheep*, and *Peter* calls them the (*l*) *flock of God*: Therefore *Chriſt is God*.

(*m*) "THY *maker* is thy *huſband*, (the LORD OF HOSTS is his *name*:) and thy *redeemer* the *holy one of Iſrael*, the GOD of the *whole earth ſhall he be called*." The *huſband* or *bridegroom* of the church, and her *redeemer* is here called the LORD OF HOSTS, and the GOD (*Elohim*, or *Judge*) of the whole earth: But JESUS CHRIST is *huſband* or *bridegroom*, and *redeemer* of the church;—(*n*) "The *huſband* is the head of the wife, *even as Chriſt* is the head of the church. (*o*) Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: For the *marriage* of the *Lamb* is come, and *his wife* hath made herſelf ready. (*p*) Come hither, and I will ſhew thee the *bride*, *the Lamb's wife*. (*q*) *Chriſt* hath *redeemed* us from the curſe of the law,—(*r*) in whom we have *redemption* through *his blood*. (*s*) Ye were not redeemed with corruptable things, as ſilver and gold, but with the precious blood of *Chriſt*." Therefore JESUS CHRIST is the LORD OF HOSTS, the GOD *of the whole earth*.

(*t*) "THE LORD GOD of the *holy Prophets ſent his Angel*, to ſhew unto his ſervants the things which muſt ſhortly be done." The *Angel* mentioned here, is the *Angel* of the LORD GOD: But he is the *Angel* of JESUS CHRIST, and *ſent by him*. (*u*) "I JESUS, have *ſent mine Angel* to teſtify unto you theſe things in the churches." Therefore JESUS is the LORD GOD of the *holy Prophets*.

To

(*k*) John xxi. 16. (*l*) 1 Pet. v. 2. (*m*) Iſa. liv. 5. (*n*) Eph. v. 23. (*o*) Rev. xix. 7. (*p*) ibid. xxi. 9. (*q*) Gal. iii. 13. (*r*) Col. i. 14. (*s*) 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. (*t*) Rev. xxii. 6. (*u*) ibid. 16.

To which we may add, (*v*) "And *Thomas* anſwered and ſaid, *my* LORD and *my* GOD."

(*u*) "AND thou, child, ſhalt be called the prophet of the HIGHEST: For thou ſhalt go before the face of the LORD, to prepare *his* way." Here *John* is called the prophet of the LORD, and of the HIGHEST, whoſe way he was ſent to prepare: But it was before JESUS CHRIST that *John* was ſent, to prepare *his* way. (*x*) "*Jeſus* began to ſay unto the multitudes concerning *John*, this is he of whom it is written, behold, I ſend my meſſenger before *thy face*, who ſhall prepare *thy way* before *thee*." Therefore JESUS CHRIST is the LORD—the HIGHEST.

(*y*) "HE (*John*) ſhall be great in the ſight of the LORD; and many of the children of *Iſrael* ſhall *he* turn to the LORD their GOD, and he ſhall go before HIM." He whoſe forerunner *John* was, is here called the LORD GOD *of Iſrael*; but it was JESUS whom *John* came before and bare witneſs to. (*z*) "*John* ſeeth JESUS coming unto him, and ſaith, behold the Lamb of *God*, who taketh away the ſin of the world. This is *he* of whom I ſaid, *after me cometh* a man who is preferred before me." Therefore JESUS is the LORD GOD *of Iſrael*.†

(*a*) "I

(*v*) John xx. 28. (*u*) Luke i. 74. (*x*) Matt. xi. 7, 10. (*y*) Luke i. 15, 16, 17. (*z*) John i. 29, 30.

† To illuſtrate the former arguments, let it be conſidered, that *John* the *Baptiſt*, the forerunner of *Chriſt*, was propheſied of by *Iſaiah*, whoſe words are cited by *all the Evangeliſts*, and expreſsly called *his* when applied to *John* the *Baptiſt*. Matt. iii. 3. Mark i. 3. Luke iii. 4. John i. 23. Now, *Iſaiah* ſays, chap. xl. 3, 9, 10, 11. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderneſs, (where *John* preached) prepare the way of the LORD, (JEHOVAH) make ſtraight in the deſart, a high way for *our* GOD.—O *Jeruſalem*, that bringeſt good tidings, (thou that telleſt good tidings to *Jeruſalem*, *margin*) ſay unto

(*a*) "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *ending*, ſaith the LORD, which *is*, which *was*, and which *is to come*, the ALMIGHTY." Every character in this text proves the *Deity* of the *ſpeaker*; but that JESUS CHRIST is the *ſpeaker*, is plain from his own teſtimony in the ſame paragraph. (*b*) "And I (*John*) turned to ſee the voice of *him* that *ſpake with me*. And in the midſt of the ſeven candleſticks, one like unto the *ſon of man*,—and when I ſaw *him*, I fell at his feet as dead: And he laid his right hand upon me, ſaying unto me, fear not, I am the *firſt* and the *laſt*: I am he that *liveth*, and *was* DEAD; and, behold, I live for *evermore*, *Amen*; and have the keys of hell and of death." Therefore the characters in the text belong to JESUS CHRIST, and prove his *Deity* beyond all diſpute.

(*c*) "GOD was in *Chriſt*, *reconciling* the world to *himſelf*." Here *God* is the *reconciler*, and that to *himſelf*: But *Jeſus Chriſt* is the *reconciler*.—(*d*) "You that were ſometimes enemies, hath he (*Jeſus*) *reconciled* in the body of his fleſh through death." Therefore *Jeſus Chriſt* is GOD, the object of whom the *reconciliation* was made.

(*e*) "WHO can *forgive ſins* but GOD *only*?"—But CHRIST can *forgive ſins*. (*f*) "Even as CHRIST *forgave you*, ſo alſo do ye." Therefore he is GOD.

IT

unto the cities of *Judah*, behold *your* GOD. Behold, the LORD GOD will come with a ſtrong hand, and his arm ſhall rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd: He ſhall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his boſom, and ſhall gently lead them that are with young." All this can be applied to no other than JESUS CHRIST, the biſhop of ſouls, and good ſhepherd of the ſheep; it is therefore *he* who through this paſſage is called JEHOVAH—the LORD GOD—the GOD *of Iſrael*.

(*a*) Rev. i. 8. (*b*) ibid. i. 12, 13, 17, 18. (*c*) 2 Cor. v. 19. (*d*) Col. i. 21, 22. (*e*) Mark ii. 7. (*f*) Col. iii. 13.

IT is GOD *only* that *ſearcheth the heart.*—— (*g*) "*Thou*, even *thou only*, *knoweth the hearts of all the children of men.*" But JESUS CHRIST is the *ſearcher of hearts.*—" (*h*) "Theſe things ſaith the *Son of God*,—All the churches ſhall know that *I am he*, *who ſearcheth the reins and hearts.*" Therefore he is GOD.

THE Pſalmiſt ſays, it was the (*i*) LORD GOD that *aſcended on high*, and led captivity captive. But the Apoſtle (*k*) ſays, it was CHRIST that did ſo: Therefore he is the LORD GOD.

(*l*) "IN that day, ſaith the LORD, (JEHOVAH) they ſhall look on *me* whom they have *pierced.*" But it was JESUS CHRIST who was *pierced.* (*m*) "One of the ſoldiers with a ſpear *pierced* his ſide, that the ſcripture ſhould be fulfilled,—they ſhall look on *him* whom they have pierced." Therefore JESUS CHRIST is JEHOVAH.

THE *blood* which was the price of the church's redemption, is called the *blood of God.* (*n*) "Feed the church of GOD, which he hath *purchaſed* with his *own blood.*" But this was the blood of JESUS CHRIST.—(*o*) "And the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, ſaying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof: For thou waſt *ſlain*, and haſt *redeemed* us to *God* by thy *blood.*" Therefore he is GOD.

(*p*) "THE *life* was manifeſted, and we have ſeen it, and bear witneſs, and ſhew unto you *that eternal*

(*g*) 1 Kings viii. 39. (*h*) Rev. ii. 18, 23. (*i*) Pſa. lxviii. 17, 18. (*k*) Eph. iv. 7, 8, 9. (*l*) Zach. xii. 4, 10. (*m*) John xix. 34. (*n*) Acts xx. 28. (*o*) Rev. v. 8, 9. (*p*) 1 John i. 2.

eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto us." It is certain that in this text, *Jeſus Chriſt* is called *that eternal life*; let us then ſee, what another title the ſame Apoſtle adds to this. (*q*) "And we are in him that is *true*, even in his *ſon* JESUS CHRIST, this is the TRUE GOD, and (but more agreeable to the original *even* the) ETERNAL LIFE." This title the *eternal life*, is in both texts given to *Jeſus Chriſt*, agreeable to many other of the ſame import in ſcripture, which the greateſt ſtretch in criticiſm cannot interpret otherways: it muſt then follow, if the Apoſtle wrote truth, that JESUS CHRIST, who is the *eternal life*, is the TRUE GOD.

THE Apoſtle affixes the ſame idea to being *born of Chriſt*, and being *born of God*, and ſpeaks of them as the ſame privilege to the ſaints, conveying the ſame ſenſe. (*r*) "Every one that doth righteouſneſs, is *born of him*, (*Chriſt* the perſon ſpoken of in the context.) (*s*) Behold what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the *ſons of God*." The inference is plain, that in the Apoſtle's ſenſe *Jeſus Chriſt* is *God*.

THE like concluſion is evident from what this ſame Apoſtle ſays, (*t*) "Hereby perceive we the love of GOD, becauſe he laid down *his life* for us." *God* in this verſe, is the proper antecedent to the relative *his*, and points out on the face of the text, that *he* was *God*, who laid down his life for us; but this was *Chriſt*, therefore *he* is GOD.

(*u*) "LOOKING for, and haſtening to the coming

(*q*) 1 John v. 10. (*r*) ibid. ii. 29. (*s*) ibid. iii. 1, 9. (*t*) ibid. iii. 16. (*u*) 2 Pet. iii. 12.

ing of the *day of God.*" The ſame that *Peter* calls the *day of God*, *Paul* calls the *day of Chriſt.* (*v*) "That ye may be ſincere, and without offence 'till the *day of Chriſt.*" Therefore he is GOD.

UNCHANGEABLENESS is proper only to JEHOVAH.—(*w*) "I am JEHOVAH, I CHANGE NOT." But JESUS CHRIST is *unchangeable.*—(*x*) "JESUS CHRIST, the *ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever.*" § Therefore *he is* JEHOVAH.

MOSES ſays, the children of *Iſrael* (*y*) *tempted* JEHOVAH: The Pſalmiſt ſays, (*z*) they *tempted the* MOST HIGH GOD: But the Apoſtle *Paul* ſays, it was (*a*) CHRIST *they tempted.* Therefore CHRIST muſt be JEHOVAH the MOST HIGH GOD.

(*b*) "NOW unto *him* that is *able* to keep you from falling, and to *preſent* you faultleſs before the preſence of his glory, with exceeding great joy, to the *only wiſe God our Saviour*, be glory and majeſty, &c." Here it is the *only wiſe God*, who is able to *preſent* us before the preſence of his glory; but the Apoſtle *Paul* ſays, *Chriſt* ſhall do this.—(*c*) "That *he* (*Chriſt*) might *preſent it* (*the church*) to *himſelf*

(*v*) Phil. i. 10. (*w*) Mal. iii. 6. (*x*) Heb. xiii. 8. (*y*) Exod. xvii. 2. (*z*) Pſa. lxxviii. 56. (*a*) 1 Cor. x. 9. (*b*) Jude 24, 25. (*c*) Eph. v. 27.

§ This text the *Arians* interpret of the doctrine, not of the perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*; becauſe, to preach *Chriſt* in ſeveral other texts, means to preach the doctrines of *Chriſt*; hence, ſay they, "this text points out *Jeſus Chriſt*, as the ſame ſaviour, and his goſpel the ſame to them of old,—to the Hebrews then,—and would be the ſame to all generations that were to come." Even in this ſenſe, by an eaſy conſequence, it is a clear proof of the Deity of *Jeſus Chriſt*, as it proves that he governed the world in general, and the church in particular, in all ages, which none but the ſupreme *God* could do. This, I ſhall prove at large in the ſequel.

himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing." Therefore he is the ONLY WISE GOD *our Saviour*, to *whom* (in the words of the Apoſtle) we aſcribe (*d*) "*glory* and *majeſty*, *dominion* and *power*, both now and ever. *Amen*."

MANY more texts might have been compared in ſupport of the proper *Deity* of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; but I thought it beſt to take only ſuch under this head, as when compared, the inference would be obvious at firſt ſight to the meaneſt capacity.

THE reader will now ſuffer me, in the ſame manner, to prove the proper *Deity* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, by a few plain examples from ſcripture.

THE ſame LORD OF HOSTS that *Iſaiah* ſaw, *ſaid unto him*, (*e*) "Go and tell this people; hear ye indeed, but underſtand not, &c." But the Apoſtle ſaith expreſsly, that theſe were the words of the HOLY GHOST. (*f*) "Well *ſpake* the HOLY GHOST by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, ſaying, go unto this people, and ſay, hearing ye ſhall hear, and ſhall not underſtand, &c." Therefore the HOLY GHOST is the LORD OF HOSTS.

THE people of *Iſrael* is often in the Old Teſtament ſaid to *reſiſt* and rebel againſt JEHOVAH: But *Stephen* ſays, it was the HOLY GHOST they *reſiſted*. (*g*) "Ye ſtiff-necked, and uncircumciſed in heart and ears, ye do always *reſiſt* the HOLY GHOST: As *your Fathers did*, ſo do ye." Therefore the HOLY GHOST is JEHOVAH.

(*d*) Jude ver. 25. (*e*) Iſa. vi. 9. (*f*) Acts xxviii. 25, 26. (*g*) ibid. vii. 51.

THE ſpiritual *birth* is the work of GOD. (*h*) "Whatſoever is *born of God*, overcometh the world. (*i*) To them gave he power to become the *ſons of God*,—who were *born* not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but *of God*." But this is the work of the SPIRIT.—(*k*) "Except a man be born of water, and of the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is *born* of the fleſh, is fleſh; and that which is *born* of the *ſpirit*, is ſpirit." Therefore the SPIRIT is GOD.

HE whom *Chriſt* teacheth us to pray to as our *heavenly Father*, is the *object of worſhip*, and muſt be GOD. But he muſt be our *Father*, of whom we are *begotten* and *born*, in the ſtile of ſcripture, and that is the SPIRIT, as the laſt article proves: Therefore the SPIRIT is included in the term *Father*, as the *object of worſhip*, and conſequently muſt be GOD.

TO GOD only are we to *pray*, who alone hath power to ſend forth labourers into his harveſt.—(*l*) "Pray ye therefore the LORD *of the harveſt*, that he would *ſend forth* labourers into his harveſt." But the HOLY GHOST ſends them forth. (*m*) "So they (*Barnabas* and *Paul*) being *ſent forth by the* HOLY GHOST." Therefore he is the *object of prayer*,—the LORD *of the harveſt*,—and muſt be the *true* GOD.

HE is the *Supreme Being*, whom the Saints have worſhipped under the divine titles of LORD and GOD.—(*n*) "Then he (*Simeon*) *bleſſed God*, and ſaid, *Lord*

(*h*) 1 John v. 4. (*i*) John i. 12, 13. (*k*) ibid. iii. 5, 6. (*l*) Matt. ix. 38. (*m*) Acts xiii. 4. (*n*) Luke ii. 28, 29.

Lord now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according to *thy word*. For mine eyes have ſeen *thy ſalvation*." But it was the *word* of the HOLY GHOST he here ſpeaks of.—(*o*) "It was *revealed* unto him (*Simeon*) by the HOLY GHOST, that he ſhould not ſee death, before he had ſeen the *Lord's Chriſt*." Therefore the HOLY GHOST, who is here worſhipped under the ſacred titles of LORD and GOD, is the *Supreme Being*.

THE *calling* and *work* of the Apoſtles were under the ſole direction of GOD.—(*p*) "No man taketh this honour to himſelf, but he that is *called of God*." But this *calling* and *work* were under the direction of the HOLY GHOST.—(*q*) "The HOLY GHOST ſaid, ſeparate ME, *Barnabas* and *Saul*, for the *work* whereunto *I have called them*." Therefore the HOLY GHOST is GOD.

HE who qualified the Apoſtles, and firſt propagators of chriſtianity, with ſuch a diverſity of extraordinary *gifts* of (*r*) *wiſdom*—*knowledge*—*faith*—*working of miracles*—*healing all diſeaſes*—*prophecy*—*diſcerning of ſpirits*—*interpretation of tongues*—and *ſpeaking divers kinds of languages* to the *different kinds of people* where they came, muſt be not only *omnipotent*, or he could neither beſtow the *gifts*, nor ſupport *them* to whom they were given in the due and regular exerciſe of them; but he muſt be *omnipreſent* alſo; at the ſame time preſent in all places, however diſtant: This the Apoſtle ſaith, is (*s*) "the *ſame* GOD that worketh all in all;" and at the ſame time ſays, (*t*) "But all theſe *worketh* that *one* and the *ſelf-ſame* SPIRIT, dividing to

(*o*) Luke ii. 26. (*p*) Heb. v. 4. (*q*) Acts xiii. 2. (*r*) 1 Cor. xii. 4,—12. (*s*) ver. 6. (*t*) ver. 11.

to every man ſeverally as HE WILL." Therefore the SPIRIT is GOD *omnipotent*, and *every where preſent*.

IF the laſt cited texts are compared with what the Apoſtle ſaith,—(*u*) "*God* alſo bearing them (the Apoſtles) witneſs, both with ſigns and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt*, according to *his own will*." It will ſhew the ſtrength of the former argument in another point of view, *viz.* That the ſame things are done by the *will* of the SPIRIT, that are ſaid to be done by the *will* of GOD: It muſt follow, that as they have but *one will*, they are but *one* God.

THE ſcriptures were indited by God.—(*v*) "All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God." But it was the HOLY GHOST that *inſpired* the penmen who wrote the ſcriptures.—(*w*) "Holy men of God, ſpake as they were *moved* by the HOLY GHOST." Therefore he is GOD.

GOD only is the author of all *ſpiritual comfort*. —(*x*) "Bleſſed be GOD,—the GOD of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations." But the HOLY GHOST is *the comforter*, in whoſe comfort the churches *reſt*.—(*y*) "But the *comforter*, which is the HOLY GHOST, whom the Father will ſend in my name, he ſhall teach you all things. (*z*) Then had the churches *reſt*,—walking in the fear of the *Lord*, and in the *comfort* of the HOLY GHOST." Therefore he is GOD.

IT is GOD that *dwelleth* in believers.—— "Who-

(*u*) Heb. ii. 4. (*v*) 2 Tim. iii. 16. (*w*) 2 Pet. i. 21. (*x*) 2 Cor. i. 3, 4. (*y*) John xiv. 26. (*z*) Acts ix. 31.

(*a*) "Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that *Jeſus* is the ſon of *God*, GOD *dwelleth in him*, and he in *God*. (*b*) GOD is *in you* of a truth." But it is the SPIRIT that *dwelleth* in believers.—(*c*) "The SPIRIT *of God dwelleth in you*. (*d*) The SPIRIT of Truth *dwelleth* with you, and ſhall be *in you*." Therefore he is GOD.

IT is GOD who *teacheth* the ſaints.—(*e*) "They ſhall be all *taught of* GOD." But it is the HOLY GHOST that *teacheth* them.—(*f*) "Not in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but which the HOLY GHOST *teacheth*." Therefore he is GOD.

THE Apoſtle ſays, (*g*) "It was the long-ſuffering of GOD, that waited in the days of *Noah*:" But *Moſes* ſays, (*h*) "It was the SPIRIT that did *ſtrive* with the men of that generation." Therefore the SPIRIT is GOD.

NONE, but one *infinitely wiſe* can know the deep things of the counſel and purpoſe of *God*.—(*i*) "O the *depth* of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of *God*! How *unſearchable* are his judgments, and his ways *paſt finding out*! For who hath known the *mind* of the LORD, or who hath been his *counſellor*?" But this the SPIRIT can do.—(*k*) "The SPIRIT *ſearcheth all things, yea, the deep things of* GOD. The things of GOD knoweth no man, but the SPIRIT of *God*." Therefore the SPIRIT is *infinitely wiſe*, and ſo muſt be GOD.

THE

(*a*) 1 John iv. 15. (*b*) 1 Cor. xiv. 25. (*c*) ibid. iii. 16. (*d*) John xiv. 17. (*e*) John vi. 45. (*f*) 1 Cor. ii. 13. (*g*) 1 Pet. iii. 20. (*h*) Gen. vi. 3. (*i*) Rom. xi. 33, 34. (*k*) 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

THE Apoſtles ſay, (*k*) It was GOD,—the LORD GOD, the *maker* of heaven and earth, the ſea, and all that therein is: who *ſpake* by the mouth of his ſervant *David*. But *Peter* ſays, (*l*) it was the *Holy Ghoſt* that ſpake by the mouth of his ſervant *David*. Therefore theſe divine names and works are properly attributed to the *Holy Ghoſt*, from which it is manifeſt that he is the true and ſupreme * GOD.

TO conclude theſe arguments for the Deity of the Spirit, I muſt let the reader know, how plain and indiſputable this truth would have appeared, if all the texts where the phraſe *ſpirit of God*,—and *ſpirit of the Lord*, occurs, had been properly tranſlated. We have generally the word *of*, which denotes poſſeſſion, put betwixt Spirit, and *Lord* or *God*, which poſſeſſive commonly in *Engliſh* ſignifies *property*, and implies ſubordination of one to another, if applied to *different perſons*. And if *one perſon* only be ſuppoſed, then the phraſe *his Spirit*, ſignifies *his mind* or *power*. Theſe ideas *ſeem* moſt natural, when ſuch expreſſions are applied to *God* as *his Spirit*, the *Spirit of God*, which, without the help of a figure, cannot ſo evidently prove the proper Deity of the *Spirit*, when ſuch poſſeſſives are uſed; but muſt rather refer to the *œconomical* character

(*k*) Acts iv. 24, 25. (*l*) Acts i. 16. Alſo compare Luke i. 68, 70, with Acts xxviii. 25.

* Becauſe ſo many have uſed the phraſe *ſupreme God*, as peculiarly applicable to the Father, implying, that the Son and Spirit are *ſubordinate Gods*; I have ſometimes choſen this term, to ſhew that they have an equal title to this, and every other character which implieth Deity. If it be uſed *incluſively*, or when applied to *one*, not *excluſive* of the other *two*, I ſee no manner of danger there is, more than in the term *Great God*, ‡ which, if applied to *one excluſively*, would alſo infer the other *two* to be *leſſer Gods*.

‡ *Tit.* ii. 13. *Rev.* xix. 17.

character of the *Spirit*, in the diſpenſation of *God*, when the word *Spirit* is conſidered *perſonally*, or ſomething diſtinct from GOD: But otherwiſe, the expreſſion *his Spirit*, or the *Spirit of God*, will only point out the *mind*, *power*, or ſome other attribute of *God*. Theſe ideas have been induſtriouſly improved by the enemies to the proper Deity of the *Spirit*, as the ſtrongeſt arguments they could find againſt it.

BUT a little attention given to the texts, rendered *Spirit of God*,—the *Spirit of the Lord*, would have ſaved *them* the labour of diſputing about words; and the orthodox the trouble of defending that truth from expreſſions which they accommodate to it by the aſſiſtance of figures very aukwardly applied, and which, the cauſe itſelf needs no aſſiſtance from, if the poſſeſſives are left out of the text, which they really ought to be. Hence ſuch texts as the following, ſhould read, (*m*) "The SPIRIT GOD (RUACH ELOHIM) moved upon the face of the waters. (*n*) And *Pharoah* ſaid unto his ſervants, can we find ſuch a man as this, in whom is the SPIRIT ELOHIM? (*o*) The SPIRIT GOD hath made me. (*p*) The SPIRIT JEHOVAH reſts upon me. (*q*) The SPIRIT, the LORD JEHOVAH, is upon me, for JEHOVAH hath anointed me to preach good tidings." In like manner, we might mention above a dozen places, where ſuch expreſſions are uſed without any poſſeſſive. It is therefore beyond contradiction, that *Spirit* and *God* are the ſame, where they are joined in theſe texts, throughout the Old Teſtament. This idea ſets the *Deity* of the *Spirit* in the cleareſt point of view.

It

(*m*) Gen. i. 2. (*n*) ibid. xli. 38. (*o*) Job xxxiii. 4. (*p*) Iſa. xi. 2. (*q*) ibid. lxi. 1.

It is a general rule in all languages, that two names or words, not diſtinguiſhed by any article, prepoſition, or other word, commonly belong to the ſame thing.

THE not attending to this, has been the occaſion of many fooliſh and unworthy conceits concerning the *Spirit*. Hence, a very learned and ingenious critic, tho' he cites the words in Gen. ii. 2, in *Hebrew* characters, which is RUACH ELOHIM, and tells us, that it is ſo in many other places, yet makes this obſervation thereon, "That as *Elohim* is plural, it ſhews that he (the Spirit) proceeds from more perſons than one." On this he builds the proceſſion of the *Holy Ghoſt* from the *Father* and the *Son*. A very ſtrange foundation indeed!

AS *Ruach* is in the ſingular number, and *Elohim* is plural, as we proved above, the one muſt imply the ſingular character of Deity, as the *one* infinite eternal *Spirit*: And *Elohim*, a plural, muſt be viewed in that relative light in which *God* hath revealed himſelf to men.

I muſt again put the reader in mind, that I by no means pretend to tell the modus of divine exiſtence, or anſwer that curious queſtion, which ſome may aſk here, "How can theſe things be?" I find revelation joins ELOHIM, a *plural*, and RUACH, a *ſingular*, to point out the ſame divine *Being*; but how this plurality ſubſiſts in *Deity*, becauſe not revealed, I leave to infinite intelligence; but that it is ſo, remains a truth while theſe words ſtand in the Bible, JEHOVAH ELOHIM,—RUACH ELOHIM.—Theſe THREE are ONE.

HAVING now proved, *firſt*, by a collection of ſcripture

ſcripture texts, that the names, attributes, perfections, and works, proper only to *Deity*, are aſcribed to the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*.

AND *ſecondly*, demonſtrated the truth of their *Deity*, by comparing one text with another, from which the concluſions are both eaſy and ſtrong in favour of the point.

I ſhall next, as propoſed, illuſtrate the truth of *Chriſt*'s proper *Deity*, by conſidering the ſcope of ſeveral paſſages in revelation, which have a relation to that ſubject.

SECT. V.

IF it can be made appear from ſcripture, that our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* created all things,—governed the world in general, and the church in particular, both under the Old and New Teſtaments,—was manifeſted by all the god-like appearances under the Old Teſtament to the Patriarchs and Prophets, and under the New to the Apoſtles;—did all the mighty works we read of among his ancient people, the *Jews*,—aſſumed the names and titles, and claimed the worſhip and homage due only to *God*: And whom not only the *Jews* worſhipped as their *God* and king,—but whom chriſtians on earth, and both ſaints and Angels in heaven do account worthy to receive all worſhip, honour, glory, and praiſe. If theſe things are evident in ſcripture, none that credit revelation can doubt, that he is the TRUE GOD.

THAT *Jeſus Chriſt* created all things, was proved from ſeveral plain texts, in page 33, and were it neceſſary, many more might be added. And as we muſt admit it as a truth, from ſuch abundance of divine teſtimonies, that all things were made by *Jeſus Chriſt*, it muſt be undeniably true, by a very natural conſequence, that he is the ruler and governor of them all. For the very notion of creature exiſtence, implies in it a dependence upon the will and government of the creator. And if we ſuppoſe the creature to be rational, and conſequently under a *law*, then its exiſtence as ſuch denotes not only dependence upon the will of the creator, but that it is accountable to him as the law-giver, ruler, and judge. Creator and creature are relative terms, and imply the neceſſity of

of rule and government: Unleſs we could imagine (which would be contradictory, if not blaſphemous) that the creator ſhewed ſo much wiſdom in the making of creatures, without any deſign to rule and govern them: Or, in ſhort, that he was not able to manage the things he had made.

SEEING then it is infallibly true, that by the immediate agency of the divine *word* (*Jeſus Chriſt*) all things were made; *He* muſt be the immediate ruler of the world in general, and of Angels and men in particular. This will be further manifeſt, from a conſideration of the ſcripture account of *his* character, who governed the church in all ages.

AND here we are in a great meaſure *confined* to the rule and government of the church: Becauſe revelation is a hiſtory not ſo much of the world, as of the church, and takes no more of the affairs of the world into the account, than is neceſſary ſome way or other to compleat the hiſtory of the church. So that the *Bible* in general, may be called *God*'s hiſtory of the church in all ages. And it hath theſe two properties, which no other hiſtory can pretend to, *firſt*, that all the facts are infallibly related by him who was an eye witneſs, and directed the whole. *Secondly*, this hiſtory is not confined to paſt facts, which all others muſt be, but extends to all future periods, to the end of time, with the ſame exactneſs as if they were paſt. Yet, from the account we have of the church, we learn, that he who guided and governed it by his wiſdom and power, alſo ruled the world in general, tho' in very different reſpects.

I DO not propoſe to take under conſideration, all the

the remarkable things which occur in the government of the church; this would be to tranſcribe almoſt the whole Bible; only a few inſtances, to make it evident, that *Jeſus Chriſt* was the ſole director of every thing pertaining to it in all ages.

It is evident beyond diſpute, that in a great number of appearances, recorded in the Old Teſtament, whether in a bright cloud,—flame of fire,—or as a man, who is often called Angel, he who ſpake aſſumed the higheſt names and characters of Deity. And the ſpectators, as well as the ſacred penmen or hiſtorians, call him God, Jehovah, &c. aſcribe ſuch perfections,—and give him ſuch homage and worſhip, as are due to none but Almighty *God*. It muſt then be equally true, that it was *God* who ſpake, whether in the cloud, in the fire, or in the man, who is ſo often called Angel.

That it was not a common Angel is plain; for he challenges divine worſhip, which no created Angel ever did. We have many inſtances of the appearance of other Angels, ſent upon particular errands, both in the Old and New Teſtaments, as miniſters in the affairs of providence; yet none of theſe ever aſſumed divine titles, nor would they allow any kind of worſhip to be given them; much leſs did they challenge the names and honour due only to *God*. On the contrary, they declared themſelves ſpecial meſſengers ſent by divine authority,—expreſsly refuſed divine worſhip, when through miſtake offered them,—and prefaced their embaſſies, with a *thus ſaith the Lord*. This is a manifeſt diſcrimination betwixt their character and him, who, in all his appearances, bears the titles and receives the worſhip which belong to *God*.

It

IT is likewiſe evident from the ſcope of ſcripture, and agreed to by every denomination of chriſtians in general, that *God* under the character of *Paternity*, or he whom the ſcriptures call the *Father*, hath throughout the whole diſpenſation of revelation, always maintained the character of the *inviſible God*, "whom (ſays the Apoſtle) no man hath ſeen, or can ſee." Or as our Saviour affirms, "Not that any man hath ſeen the *Father*,—ye have neither heard *his* voice at any time, nor ſeen his ſhape." As we cannot in the leaſt degree call in queſtion ſo plain a teſtimony concerning the *Father*, by the *Son*, "who only knows the *Father*, and can reveal him," we may ſafely conclude, it was not the Father that made theſe appearances which are recorded in the Old Teſtament.

AND as to the *Holy Ghoſt*, he never appeared (that we read of) as a man, or acted as an external meſſenger; his work in the divine œconomy being internal upon the mind, according to what we can learn from revelation concerning him under that name.

BUT as the ſcriptures repreſent *Jeſus Chriſt* as the *image* of the *inviſible God*,—his *expreſs image*,—the *brightneſs* of his glory,—in whom the Father dwells,—the *revealer* of the Father,—the *word* of *God*, by whom he is *manifeſted* and made known, as a man doth his mind by his words,—we have good ground to conclude, from theſe general conſiderations, that whatever divine meſſenger we read of in the Old Teſtament that appeared to good men, (by whatever manner of appearance) to whom the name of GOD in a proper ſenſe, or JEHOVAH is aſcribed; or to whom theſe good men paid worſhip and homage, due *only to God*: This

meſſenger

meſſenger may with all ſafety be owned to be the *true God*, tho' he uſes ſuch names as to us may ſeem to imply inferiority, or rather † *condeſcenſion*; and at the ſame time, to be the *Logos*, or *word of God*, who under the New Teſtament is known by the name *Jeſus Chriſt*.

THESE things kept in view, it will plainly appear to any attentive reader of the Bible, that he who appeared on various occaſions under the ſacred titles of GOD, JEHOVAH, GOD-ALMIGHTY, and received the worſhip of the ſaints, is no other than the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

BUT before I ſhew from particular inſtances, that theſe appearances are applied to him in the New Teſtament, it will be neceſſary to remove an objection or two, raiſed againſt this doctrine in general, by ſuch as are afraid of the force of it, in proving the proper Deity of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

THEY

† When we at any time ſpeak of *inferiority* as applied to *Jeſus Chriſt*, we ſhould take care not to loſe ſight of his *condeſcenſion*, which has been too little attended to in the controverſy with thoſe, who will allow him to be no more than an *inferior God*. Tho' he *condeſended* to become man, and acted in an *inferior* character, this did not change his *divine* character, (which our divines have given too much occaſion to conceive, by the terms they have uſed on this ſubject) but only ſhewed his *grace* and *condeſcenſion*. He aſſumed a form when he was manifeſt in fleſh, which he had not before, but remained the ſame unchangeable JEHOVAH. The very *heathens* ſeem to have underſtood this notion of *condeſcenſion* in *their Gods*: For when *Paul* and *Barnabas* had cured the impotent man at *Lyſtra*, they cried, "The *Gods are come down to us in the likeneſs of men*." They wondered at ſo great *condeſcenſion*, but never imagined that their *Gods* had *leſs* divinity, or were *leſs* to be worſhipped for the change of their form: For they ſtill gave them their higheſt titles, *Jupiter* and *Mercurius*; and their high *Prieſt*, with the people, were ready to worſhip them, in the moſt ſolemn manner their religion could expreſs. But among chriſtians, there are many who will not allow the *Deity* to be manifeſt in the fleſh, in grace and *condeſcenſion*, without denying him *ſupreme* worſhip, and the character of the *true God*.

THEY do not deny that it was *Jeſus Chriſt* who made theſe appearances, and they dare not deny, that the titles and worſhip due to *God* are given to him; but not ſatisfied that he ſhould have ſuch honour, in a *proper ſenſe*, they endeavour to account for his aſſuming theſe divine honours in an *improper* and *figurative ſenſe*, as a *meſſenger*, *ambaſſador*, or at moſt an *inferior God*, *ſent* and *authorized* by the *Great God*. Hence they argue with great aſſurance, "That as ambaſſadors among men may ſpeak in the ſame manner, and receive the ſame honour, as thoſe in whoſe name they come; ſo *Jeſus Chriſt*, conſiſtent with his being a creature of high rank, might, as a repreſentative or deputy, clothed with authority from the ſupreme *God*, and repreſenting his ſacred Majeſty, aſſume the names, and receive the worſhip due to *God*."

Anſ. THIS argument is not only weak, but quite foreign to the point. The antecedent, or firſt propoſition, is not true in fact. No examples can be found of any ambaſſador aſſuming his maſter's titles. He who had ſuch preſumption, muſt be poſſeſſed of a larger ſhare of pride than *Rabſhakeh* himſelf, who ſaid, "Thus ſaith the *great king of Aſſyria*,—my maſter ſent me to ſpeak theſe words." But according to the objection, he would have ſaid, "*I am the king of Aſſyria.*" Whatever pride *Nuncios*, *Legates*, and *Ambaſſadors* may otherwiſe ſhew, none of them preſume to ſay, *I am the Pope of Rome*,—*I am the king of Britain*,—or, *I am the king of France*.

BUT tho' the firſt propoſition were true, which it is not, yet there is not the leaſt connection betwixt it and the latter. For tho' ambaſſadors among men were to aſſume their maſter's titles and

and honour, there is ſome proportion, but in the other caſe there is none. Here the diſtance is really infinite betwixt the greateſt creature, and the great *God*. In the one caſe, it would be a miſdemeanor betwixt man and man: But in the other, it would be the higheſt ſacrilege, and would lead directly to the moſt abominable idolatry, in giving the worſhip due to *God* to any creature. We may venture to ſay, it is impoſſible that *God* would indulge men in any ſuch miſtake. And if to the impoſſibility of the ſuppoſition, we add the abſolute ſecurity *God* hath given us, that he will by no means do ſo, it may certainly, at leaſt, blunt the edge of ſuch unguarded zeal, in favour of an argument every way ſo unworthy of the character of *God*, who has expreſsly declared, "Thou ſhalt worſhip the *Lord* thy *God*, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve. Thou ſhalt worſhip no other *God*, for the *Lord* thy *God*, whoſe name is jealous, is a jealous *God*. I am JEHOVAH, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another."

GOD, who well knew how ready the *Jews* were to be taken with appearances, and fall into idolatry, guards them againſt it in the ſtrongeſt terms. This ſeems to be one reaſon why there were no appearances in human ſhape to them, while in the wilderneſs, tho' the appearances both before and after that were ſo, that they might have no foundation of framing images of *God*. But in all the appearances, whether in human ſhape, or as an Angel, the titles and worſhip of JEHOVAH were claimed, and freely given by *Abraham*, *Moſes*, and others, ſo that we may juſtly conclude, he who appeared was *God*, in the moſt *true* and *proper ſenſe*.

BUT

BUT there remains another general objection, which is, that the fiery buſh,—the flame on *Sinai*,—the pillar of cloud, and fire in which GOD appeared, may be called GOD and JEHOVAH, with the ſame propriety, as the man or Angel in whom GOD appeared.

Anſ. HERE it muſt be remarked, that neither the buſh, fire, cloud, the man or Angel, in which GOD appeared, is called GOD or JEHOVAH, but as they include the idea of *Deity* that dwell in them. And tho' all the motions and geſtures of the ſymbol of GOD's preſence, in which he appeared for the time are aſcribed to GOD; yet theſe ſymbols of his preſence are never called GOD, when conſidered alone; but only as they included the divine inhabitant. As *David* ſaid of the Ark, "GOD is gone up with a ſhout."—When the Ark moved, *Moſes* ſaid, "Ariſe, JEHOVAH, and let thine enemies be ſcattered." And when it reſted, he ſaid, "Give reſt, JEHOVAH, unto the many thouſands of *Iſrael*." Which could not be meant of the Ark, but of the GOD whoſe preſence it repreſented, and who is ſaid to dwell upon it. The Dove-like appearance which deſcended upon *Chriſt* at his baptiſm, is called the *Holy Ghoſt*: But it cannot be imagined that the Dove was GOD, the Spirit; but only a ſymbol of his preſence. And ſo the fire and cloud, which appeared on *Mount Sinai*, in the tabernacle, and temple, were only deſigned as ſymbols of GOD's preſence, as he tells *Moſes*, "Lo, I come to thee in a thick cloud." *Exo.* xix. 9. I will appear in the cloud upon the Mercy's ſeat. *Lev.* xvi. 2.

THE names that expreſs *Deity*, are not uſed on theſe occaſions in a *figurative* and *metaphorical* ſenſe, as both the objections would inſinuate; but in a

true and divine ſenſe, applied to GOD *himſelf*, conſidered in ſuch a habitation as he for the time made uſe of as a ſymbol of his preſence, whether it was a cloud, or fire, the Angel, or the man.

BUT in which ever one of theſe, it ſeems evident from the narratives of the appearances, that the *angelic medium* was always uſed, which moved and ſpake through what was corporeal in the appearance. For the names JEHOVAH, GOD, and ANGEL, are uſed promiſcuouſly; and it is ſaid ſometimes the one appeared, ſpake, &c. and ſometimes the other, in the very ſame appearance. But it is never ſaid the buſh, fire, cloud, or flame ſpoke, but only GOD, or the Angel in them. By which it appears, that the *Angel*, and not the cloud or fire, aſſumed the divine characters. What makes this perfectly clear, is the diſtinction which *Moſes* makes betwixt the pillar of cloud, and the divine inhabitant.—(*a*) "And the LORD went before them by day *in* a pillar of cloud, to lead them in the way; and by night *in* a pillar of fire, to give them light." Compare this with what he ſays a little after.—(*b*) "And the *Angel* of *God*, which went before the camp of *Iſrael*, removed, and went behind them; and the *pillar* of *cloud* went from before their face, and ſtood behind them." Theſe two things are plain here, *firſt*, that the pillar of cloud is not called the *Lord*, nor the *Angel*, they are mentioned as different; the *Lord* is ſaid to be *in* the pillar of cloud, and the Angel and cloud are expreſſed in much the ſame language, with a copulative, pointing out they are not the ſame. *Secondly*, that the LORD (JEHOVAH) who

(*a*) Exo. xiii. 21. (*b*) ibid. xiv. 19.

who is ſaid to lead *Iſrael* in the one text, is called the ANGEL in the other.

THIS is further evident from the appearance made to *Moſes* in the burning buſh, where it is ſaid, (*c*) "And the *Angel* of the LORD *appeared* unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midſt of the buſh,—and GOD called to him out of the midſt of the buſh,—and ſaid, I am the GOD of thy father, the GOD of *Abraham*, the GOD of *Iſaac*, and the GOD of *Jacob*. And *Moſes* hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon GOD." In the beginning of this paſſage, he is called *Angel*, in the other parts of it, the LORD GOD, JEHOVAH, the GOD of *Abraham*, *I am*, &c. And the very ſame who appeared in the buſh, and on *Mount Sinai*, who aſſumed theſe divine titles and worſhip, *Stephen* expreſsly calls the *Angel*.—(*d*) "The *Angel* which appeared to him (*Moſes*) in the buſh,—this is he that was in the church in the wilderneſs, with the *Angel* which ſpake to him in *Mount Sinai*." By an impartial reading of the narrative, it will be plain, that JEHOVAH, who appeared in the buſh,—gave the law on *Mount Sinai*, and led the people in the wilderneſs, is the ſame with the *Angel*, ſo often mentioned in the hiſtory, and referred to by *Stephen*.

AMONG many particular paſſages that might be brought to prove this, to the above, I ſhall only add *Jacob*'s account of it.—(*e*) "The *Angel* of *God* ſpake unto me in a dream, ſaying, *Jacob*: And, I ſaid, here am I, and he ſaid,—I am the GOD of *Beth-el*, where thou anointed the pillar." And when

(*c*) EXO. iii. 2, 4, 6. (*d*) Acts vii. 35, 38, (*e*) Gen. xxxi. 11,—13.

when he was bleſſing *Joſeph*'s ſons, he ſaid, *(f)* "GOD, before whom my father *Abraham* and *Iſaac* did walk, the GOD that fed me all my life long unto this day, the ANGEL which redeemed me from all evil, bleſs the lads." In both places *God* and *Angel* are ſpoken of as the ſame. Nay, the *Angel* expreſsly calls himſelf the *God* of *Beth-el*.

BUT, becauſe not only the gentlemen whoſe objections I have been conſidering, but others who are eſteemed orthodox interpreters of ſcripture, have exerciſed their talents of criticiſm, in attempting to prove that the *Angel* mentioned in the laſt text, is a created one, not the ſame, but an inferior being to *God*, who is mentioned in the ſame text; I hope the reader will have me excuſed, while I endeavour to reſcue the text from ſuch a manifeſt impoſition.

JOSEPH having brought his two ſons before his father, the aged Patriarch opens the interview, with a recapitulation of the appearance and promiſes which *God Almightly* made to him at *Luz*, which place he called *Beth-el*, (or the houſe of GOD) on t hat ſolemn occaſion.—*(g)* As GOD had there promiſed to multiply his ſeed, he takes this unexpected event as a pledge of the complete fulfilling thereof. "I had not (ſays he) thought to ſee thy face: And lo, GOD hath ſhewed me thy ſeed." And being filled with a ſenſe of GOD's abundant goodneſs to him, he proceeds to ſupplicate for the ſame bleſſings to *Joſeph*'s ſons, which had been promiſed to himſelf. Now it cannot be ſuppoſed, that he would invocate any other than the ſame *Almighty God*, who had promiſed, and ſo far above

(f) Gen. lxviii. 15, 16. *(g)* ibid. xxviii. 19.

above his expectations, already performed his promiſes unto him.

It ſhould alſo be carefully attended to, that upon the viſitation at *Beth-el*, *Jacob* vowed to God, ſaying, "If God will be with me, and will *keep me* in the way that I go, and will give me *bread to eat*, and raiment to put on; ſo that I come again in peace to my father's houſe: Then ſhall the Lord be my God." And here he acknowledgeth the receipt of what he then prayed for, ſaying, "The God that *fed me* all my life long unto this day, the *Angel* that *redeemed* me from all evil, bleſs the lads." The ſame God he had vowed to, and expected protection from, that had fed him, and redeemed him from all evil, he now addreſſes in favour of the lads; which proves the Angel to be the ſame with God in the preceding clauſe, and the *God Almighty* who appeared to *Jacob* at *Beth-el*.

But this is ſtill more manifeſt from the conſtruction of the language *Jacob* uſes. For the words here tranſlated God and Angel, have each a *demonſtrative* prefixed before them, which points them out to be the ſame, whereas had they been different, of neceſſity there would have been a *copulative* betwixt them. "*That God*, *that Angel*, that fed me, and redeemed me," muſt point at the ſame object. But had it been "the God that fed me, *and* the Angel that redeemed me," it would have pointed out different objects. Many critics read *Peter*'s ſhort confeſſion of faith,—"Thou art *that Chriſt*, *that* ſon of the living God." None will deny that *Peter* meant the ſame perſon in both; and ſo the object of *Jacob*'s addreſs

addreſs muſt be the ſame, ſeeing the demonſtratives are prefixed.

And not only ſo, but the verb here uſed is ſingular, which would be a manifeſt impropriety, if there were two intended ſo very different as the *Almighty God*, and a *created Angel*. Could we ſuppoſe the abſurdity which ſome maintain, "of joining them together in an addreſs;" yet, to make it ſenſe, it would read, "may *they* bleſs:" But to join two ſo very different Beings together, and then ſay, "may he bleſs," is wholly incongruous.

Further, if we ſuppoſe the *Angel* here a created one, it will make *Jacob*'s prayer to be very irreligious. For that which the Angel is ſaid to do, is only proper for God. To deliver his people from all evil, is what he has promiſed, and what they daily pray for, as expreſſed in our *Lord*'s ſummary, "Deliver us from all evil. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the *Lord* delivereth them out of them all." This is what they neither expect from, nor pray to *any Angel* to do. Indeed thoſe of the Popiſh perſuaſion, in which Angel worſhip is included, may: And it is moſt likely that this notion, with many others, have been taken without examination from *their* ſyſtems, who muſt hold this to be a created Angel, the better to ſupport Angel worſhip.

It is admirable how any can imagine, that *Jacob* would give to any mere creature the ſacred title of his *Redeemer*, ſeeing it is that which the ſaints glory in, as proper to God only; and what he challengeth as his peculiar prerogative. "O *Lord*, (ſaith *David*) my ſtrength and my *Redeemer*. Thus ſaith the *Lord*, your *Redeemer*. As for our *Redeemer*,

deemer, the *Lord* of Hoſts is his name. O *Lord*, our *Redeemer*, thy name is from everlaſting." (Our Redeemer from everlaſting is thy name, *Margin.*) It would be robbing GOD to give the glory of this title to any creature.

WE may juſtly conclude, that *Jacob* had the ſame object of worſhip in view, when bleſſing *Joſeph* and his ſons, that he had immediately after when bleſſing *Joſeph* among his other ſons; there he aſcribes all to GOD, ſaying,—(*b*) "His hands were made ſtrong by the mighty GOD of *Jacob*: even by the GOD of thy father, who ſhall help thee; and by the Almighty, who ſhall bleſs thee."

I SHALL only add here, that the *Angel* mentioned in this paſſage, is the ſame with the GOD before whom *Abraham* and *Iſaac* did walk, which phraſe implies the whole of their religion; as it is ſaid of *Enoch*, "he *walked* with GOD." It is the ſame *Angel* that appeared to *Jacob* in *Padanarum*, and ſaid, I am the GOD of *Beth-el*: The ſame redeeming Angel that anſwered him in his afflictions: To whom he cried for help at the meeting of his brother *Eſau*. The ſame that *fed* and *led* him and his poſterity. The Angel that *Iſaiah* calls GOD's preſence, who in his love ſaved them, and in his pity redeemed them,—who bare and carried them all the days of old,—delivering them from all evil, and increaſing them into a multitude in the earth, which was the anſwer of *Jacob's* prayer in the text: And on the whole, proves that the *Angel* mentioned here, is the ſame object with *God*, whom he addreſſes under theſe two names.

THERE is one thing I have to mention here, which

(*b*) Gen. xlix. 24, 25.

which will put the general point I am pleading for, entirely beyond all diſpute. And I am ſurprized, that none of all the diſputers for the divinity of *Chriſt*, ever took any notice of it, *viz.* That wherever the word *Angel* is joined with JEHOVAH, there is no *poſſeſſive* prefixed to them in the *Hebrew*. What we have tranſlated *the Angel of the Lord*, is the ANGEL JEHOVAH, which certainly proves them to be the ſame. And through all the Old Teſtament it is ſo, when they are joined together. For the reader's ſatisfaction, the following texts may be conſulted in the original, which he will find without any poſſeſſive ſign.

GEN. xvi. 7, 9, 10, 11. Chap. xxii. 11. Num. xxii. 23, 24, 25, 27, 31, 34, 35. Judg. ii. 1, 4. Chap. xiii. 3, 16, 18, 20, 21. Chap. v. 23. Chap. vi. 11, 12, 21, 22. 1 Kings xix. 7. 2 Kings i. 3, 15. Chap. xix. 35. 1 Chro. xxi. 12, 15, 18, 30. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Pſa. xxxiv. 7. and xxxv. 5. Zech. i. 11, 12. Chap. iii. 5, 6. Chap. xii. 8. with ſeveral others.

THO' there be no poſſeſſive ſign prefixed to *Angel*, when joined to JEHOVAH, yet there is, when it is joined with * ELOHIM, which is tranſlated GOD. This may point out to us the humble dependent character, in which the Meſſiah acted as the *meſſenger of* ELOHIM, which is a plural. Notwithſtanding, ſince the word *Angel* is joined with JEHOVAH, without the poſſeſſive ſign, it ſhews that his ſtate of dependence was *voluntary*, and that he loſes no claim to ſupremacy by that voluntary dependence: It fairly points out, that our *Saviour*, the

* Exo. xiv. 19. 1 Sam. xxix. 9. 2 Sam xiv. 17, 20. Chap. xix. 27. In Judg. xiii. 6. it wants the poſſeſſive.

the *Angel*, or *meſſenger* for us, was never leſs than JEHOVAH, and that in both characters, as to their ſignification to his church, he is equally related to them. But when *Angel* is joined with ELOHIM, it ſhews that the ANGEL JEHOVAH humbled himſelf to be a meſſenger by œconomy of ELOHIM to guilty men, to inſtruct them in heavenly wiſdom. In the character of the ANGEL JEHOVAH, our Saviour ſhews his *one-neſs* or *unity*, as *Emmanuel*; but in the character of the ANGEL of ELOHIM, he ſhews his partnerſhip in the ſcheme of man's redemption with the Father and Holy Ghoſt. We may therefore conclude, that as *Chriſt*'s name, as the *Angel* or meſſenger, and that of JEHOVAH conſtantly ſignify the ſame perſon, in the Old Teſtament, the *Meſſenger* and JEHOVAH muſt be one, that is, *Jeſus Chriſt* the *meſſenger* is JEHOVAH. And tho' he be the *meſſenger of* ELOHIM, in the way of partnerſhip in the ſcheme of man's ſalvation, yet as *Emmanuel*, he aſſumes one of the ſupreme titles that is attributed to Deity in ſcripture.

AS there are but two texts, Gen. xxviii. 12, and xxxii. 1. where the word *Angel*, as a *plural*, is joined to JEHOVAH, in which it is *hoſt* or *armies*, there is no fear of miſtaking the meaning for want of the poſſeſſive. When *Angel* is joined with *Berith*, or covenant, it has the poſſeſſive, Mal. iii. 1. Perhaps for the ſame reaſon that it is ſo when joined with ELOHIM.

HAVING thus far cleared the ſubject, I come now to ſhew that JESUS CHRIST was this ANGEL JEHOVAH,—this GOD,—the ALMIGHTY GOD,—the KING OF ISRAEL, whom they *worſhipped and adored*. It would be far too tedious to conſult the

narrative of all the appearances he made in the Old Teſtament, and ſhew how they may, or really are applied to him: Or enter particularly into all the arguments that might be advanced in proof of this point. I ſhall only ſelect a few, which I preſume, if impartially conſidered, may not only ſerve as a key to the reſt, but to the ſcope of the Old Teſtament.

I NEED not ſtay to prove that *Jeſus Chriſt* was that image of GOD, after which man was created; this is manifeſt from the text itſelf, compared with the New Teſtament character of *Chriſt*, as the image of GOD. But this we muſt obſerve, that as the image after which man was made, in a particular manner referred to that dominion man was endowed with over the lower creation; it muſt neceſſarily infer that *Jeſus Chriſt*, the image of GOD, after which he was made, had a real and univerſal dominion over all things. And it ſeems as evident that GOD appeared to man at firſt in his own ſhape, which could not fail to convince him, that even as to his body he was made in the image of GOD, that is, in ſuch a form as GOD did at that time, and would frequently after aſſume, in order to converſe with men. This he did with *Adam* while innocent, and alſo after he ſinned,—with *Cain*, who is ſaid to go out from the preſence of the *Lord* after the dialogue betwixt GOD and him,—to *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Joſhua*, *Gideon*, *Manoah*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and ſeveral other of the Prophets. This could be no common Angel, for he is always called JEHOVAH,—not the Father, nor the Spirit, for reaſons given above; therefore it muſt have been *Jeſus Chriſt*, who made theſe appearances in human form, yet called the LORD GOD, as a prelude of his

his appearance in real fleſh in the fullneſs of time, whom the Apoſtle ſays, was GOD manifeſted in the fleſh.

WHEN he who appeared is promiſcuouſly called GOD and ANGEL, it is plain that *Jeſus Chriſt* is meant. In that inſtance of *Jacob* bleſſing *Joſeph*'s ſons, it was proved that *God* and *Angel* are the ſame, and it is equally conſpicuous that *Jeſus Chriſt* is meant by both, from the terms which *Jacob* expreſſes himſelf in, which are only applicable to *Jeſus Chriſt*, in the common language of revelation.

"THE *Angel*," or meſſenger, this is emphatically applied to *Chriſt* by *Malachi*.—(*a*) "The *Lord*, whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſuddenly come to his temple: Even the *meſſenger of the covenant*, whom ye delight in." The Angel that *redeemed me*," *my kinſman redeemer*. This is a name peculiar to *Chriſt*, of whom that inſtitution of *redemption* by *kinſmen* among the *Jews*, was a ſhadow. *Job*, who lived in theſe ancient periods with *Jacob*, makes an excellent diſcovery of the ſame character of *Chriſt*.—(*b*) "I know, ſaith he, that my redeemer liveth, (I know my kinſman redeemer) and that he ſhall ſtand upon the earth." (The omega ſhall riſe from the earth.) This is certainly applicable to none but *Chriſt*, whoſe *day* both *Jacob* and *Job*, (as well as *Abraham*) ſaw afar off, and was glad.

IT is further evident that *Chriſt* is meant in the text, from his character of a *ſhepherd* being ſo plainly expreſſed in it. This *Chriſt* himſelf challengeth as his office, in a peculiar manner.—"I am

(*a*) Mal iii. 1. (*b*) Job xix. 25.

am the good ſhepherd." The Pſalmiſt and Prophets often ſpeak of him under this name.—"The *Lord* is my ſhepherd. He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd." And *Jacob* calls him "the mighty of *Jacob*, the *ſhepherd*, the ſtone of *Iſrael*." *Jacob*, and his ſeed, are denominated the *flock* of *Chriſt*. "Thou leddeſt thy flock, by the hand of *Moſes* and *Aaron*;" which privilege, *Jacob* on his death-bed very thankfully acknowledgeth his part of: "The GOD, before whom my fathers *Abraham* and *Iſaac* did walk,—the GOD that *fed me* all my life long unto this day,—the *Angel* that redeemed me from all evil." It is hence evident, that *Jeſus Chriſt* led and guided *Abraham* and his poſterity in all their peregrinations, and it is he whom they worſhipped as their *God* and *king*.

GOD ſaid to *Moſes*, (*c*) "Behold, I ſend an *Angel* before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions, for *my name is in him*" (in the midſt of him.) This, with what remains of the paragraph, comes in ſo abruptly in this chapter, without connection with what goes before or follows it, that ſome are of opinion, it properly belongs to the 33d chapter, where *Moſes* is begging of GOD to let him know how the people ſhould be guided into the land he had promiſed them. GOD tells him "his preſence ſhould go with them," and here he promiſes to ſend his *Angel* to lead them, in whom his name is. Now, as his *preſence* muſt mean *himſelf*; ſo the *name* of GOD is put for himſelf by the Pſalmiſt, "The *name* of the GOD of *Jacob* defend thee."

And

(*c*) EXO. xxiii. 20, 21.

And as his *name* was in the *Angel*, it muſt intimate a real in-dwelling of Deity in him. There can no reaſon be given, why *Chriſt* might not have Deity dwelling in him in his *angelic* character, as well as after he became fleſh, when it is ſaid, "in him *dwelleth* all the fullneſs of the *God-head* (Deity) *bodily*." That is, in him who now had a real body.

By the *name of God*, we are to underſtand that deſcription he hath given of himſelf in revelation, whereby he is known to men; and this is only in *Jeſus Chriſt*, whoſe character is the ſum of revelation. The name of God is ſo in him, as he can be known only by him. This *Chriſt* affirms himſelf. "No man knoweth the Father, but he to whom the *Son* doth reveal him." *Malachi* ſays, "The *name* of the *Lord* ſhould be great among the *Gentiles*; and that in every place incenſe and a pure offering ſhould be offered up unto his *name* by the heathen." This muſt refer to the clearer and more general diſcoveries of *Jeſus Chriſt* in the goſpel, and the homage and worſhip given to him by the great number of *Gentile* converts to chriſtianity. When *Chriſt* prays the Father to "glorify his *Name*,"—it ſeems to be of the ſame import as when he prays that he would "glorify his Son." In this ſenſe may that part of the ſummary of prayer, which *Chriſt* dictated to his diſciples, be underſtood. "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, (thy *Chriſt* who is *thy name*, as by him thou art manifeſted to us) Thy kingdom come;" which is under his adminiſtration as the king and law-giver thereof.

This *Angel*, who is called the preſence of God, in whom his name is, *Iſaiah* calls the Saviour,

our, and adds, "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, (or in all their ſtraits they were not beſieged) the *Angel of his preſence* ſaved them: In his love and in his pity, he redeemed them,—and carried them all the days of old." This is the ſame of whom *Malachi* ſpeaks,—"The LORD, whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſuddenly come to his temple; even the *meſſenger* (which is the meaning of the word *Angel*) of the covenant whom ye delight in." This is none other than *Jeſus Chriſt*, the ſame who is called the *Angel of God's preſence*, in whom *his name is*, who had the power and prerogative of GOD in pardoning or retaining the people's ſins at his pleaſure, and who claimed the titles, authority, and worſhip of *Almighty God*.

I MUST confeſs, that the account we have from *Euſebius* gives room to think the *ancients* were of a different opinion concerning this *Angel*, who is promiſed to lead *Iſrael* into *Canaan*; which is, that as *Moſes*, by divine authority gave the title of *anointed* to *Aaron*, as a type of *Chriſt*, the great high prieſt; ſo upon *Joſhua*'s defeating the *Amalikites*, whoſe name before was *Oſhea*, he added the firſt letter of *Jehovah* to his name, pointing him forth as an eminent type of *Chriſt* in his regal office, as JEHOVAH the *Saviour*, by his name *Joſhua*, which is the ſame with *Jeſus a Saviour*: And alſo in his remarkable conqueſt of *Iſrael*'s enemies, and bringing them into the promiſed land. And when our *Lord* was to aſſume fleſh, he received this name *Jeſus* by commiſſion from heaven, in alluſion to ſo eminent a type of him, as a Saviour. Therefore they conclude, that the *Angel* promiſed to lead *Iſrael*, is no other than *Joſhua* or *Jeſus* (as he is oftener than once called in the New Teſtament)

ment) the ſucceſſor of *Moſes*, whom the people were commanded to obey, becauſe he bare the ſame name, that he himſelf was to be known by, when he ſhould actually appear in fleſh. And whereas it is ſaid, "He will not pardon your tranſgreſſions," (or let your rebellion go unpuniſhed) It points out *Joſhua* having only the executive power of laws already made, committed to him; and that he would not have that acceſs as a temporary mediator, which *Moſes* had of coming into the preſence of GOD, to ſave them from puniſhment when they had ſinned.

IF this, rather than the other, be choſen as the ſenſe, it makes the point I am proving equally ſtrong: As by taking the *Angel* in this ſenſe, then *Jeſus Chriſt* is the *God* that promiſes to ſend the *Angel*, and favour the people with his preſence, if they would obey him.

A VERY little conſideration will lead any one to ſee, that it was *Jeſus Chriſt* who gave the law, and made that auguſt and ſolemn appearance on *Mount Sinai*, claiming the divine authority of giving laws to *Iſrael*, under the ſacred titles of JEHOVAH *their* GOD. In the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, the Apoſtle ſays,—(*d*) "See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh: For if they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from heaven: *Whoſe voice then ſhook the earth:* But now *he* hath promſed, ſaying, yet once more I ſhake not the earth only, but heaven alſo." This ſhaking of the earth refers to the convulſions of *Mount Sinai*, at the giving of the law. It is *Jeſus*, the mediator

(*d*) Heb. xii. 25, 26.

mediator of the New Teſtament, whom he is here ſpeaking of, as is moſt clear from the context, "*whoſe voice* (ſays he) *ſhook the earth*, &c." The promiſe mentioned is alſo referred to him. "*He* (*Jeſus*, for there is no other antecedent to this relative) hath alſo promiſed, &c." The words of the promiſe are taken from *Haggai*, (*e*) Who tells us, it was the LORD GOD that ſaid ſo; but the Apoſtle ſays it was JESUS. It is therefore manifeſt that JESUS, the mediator of the New Teſtament, is JEHOVAH the GOD of *Iſrael*, who gave the law on *Mount Sinai*,—and the LORD GOD, mentioned by *Haggai*.

IT will make this argument more conſpicuous, if we conſider him who is ſaid *to ſpeak on earth*, to be *Chriſt* in his angelic character under the Old Teſtament: (Not *Moſes*, as commonly ſuppoſed) And he who ſpeaks from heaven, the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt* in his glorious exaltation as a *Son*, at the Father's right hand. The antitheſis then will not be betwixt *Chriſt* and *Moſes*, but betwixt the character of *Chriſt*, under the more obſcure diſpenſation of the Old Teſtament, and the clear diſcoveries of his grace and power as an aſcended king and lawgiver. The Apoſtle's ſcope in the paſſage, is not to compare *Moſes* and *Chriſt*; but the *darkneſs* and *awfulneſs* of the diſpenſation of the *law*, compared to a yoke of bondage; with the *freedom* and *ſpirituality*, the *clearneſs* and *ſweetneſs* of the *goſpel*: And having proved that the excellencies and privileges of the one, are ſuperior to the other, as to *evidence*, the one being dark and cloudy, the other clear and perſpicuous. As to *extent*,—the former being confined to the *Jews*, and a few proſelytes of the *Gentiles*; the latter extends to the whole world,—its

(*e*) Hag. ii. 6.

its converts are out of all nations, &c. As to *worſhip*,—the one being a yoke, the other ſpiritual and eaſy: The one excels the other alſo in the *plenitude* and *efficacy* of the *gifts* beſtowed. The Apoſtle having made the difference ſo plain, he then makes a very natural concluſion, that therefore the obligation to attend the duties required, were in proportion to the privileges beſtowed, and the danger of contempt heightened accordingly.

WHICH ever way the reader inclines to take this part of the Apoſtle's argument, it holds true, that JESUS is the LORD OF HOSTS, who ſhook the earth in that tremendous manner when he gave the law,—and he whom *Moſes* and the people feared and worſhipped on that ſolemn occaſion.

HE who appeared to *Joſhua* on the banks of *Jorden*, calls himſelf the "Captain of the LORD's hoſts;" and by this title, intimates for his encouragement, that as he had protected the people in the wilderneſs, ſo now he appeared ready armed to lead them againſt the formidable nations, which he had formerly promiſed to drive out before them. This character is ſo much the ſame with the "Captain of ſalvation," given to *Chriſt* in the New Teſtament, that none can doubt it was he who appeared to *Joſhua*.

HE alſo appeared to *Manoah*, and called himſelf by a *name*, which, by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, is given to *Jeſus*. (*f*) "Why aſkeſt thou after my name (ſaith he to *Manoah*) ſeeing it is WONDERFUL?" as in the margin. (*g*) "His *name* (even the child that ſhould be born, and the ſon given) ſhall be called WONDERFUL."

(*f*) Judg. xiii. 18. (*g*) Iſa. ix. 6.

FROM theſe examples, it is plain that it was *Jeſus Chriſt*, who made the appearances, and claimed the honours of Deity. And were it neceſſary, we might, to the teſtimony of the Apoſtles and Prophets, add the ſuffrage of the ancient *Jews* and chriſtian Fathers, who aſcribe theſe expreſſions of ſcripture to the *word of God*,—the *Memra* or *Logos*,—and often to the *Meſſiah*, where he is repreſented in a viſible manner converſing with men, or coming to ſave them. Now, among the ancient *Jews*, the *Memra* or *Logos*, (that is the *word of God*) often ſignifies *God himſelf*,—ſomething *in and of God*,—ſome *divine principle* belonging to the *eſſence of God*, whereby he tranſacts his affairs with creatures: It alſo with them ſignified a *glorious Spirit*, ſuperior to all angels, *in whom God put his name*,—*in whom he reſided* in a peculiar manner, as in a *habitation*, which they called the *Shekinah*. Both theſe ideas may be united in the *Meſſiah*. However, it is certain, that theſe ſcriptures, where GOD is repreſented in a viſible manner, eminently, as a Saviour to his people, have been interpreted concerning *Chriſt*, by ancient *Jews*, chriſtian Fathers, and the Apoſtles themſelves. From which we may conclude, that proper Deity is included in his character: For theſe * ancient *Jews* and ſacred writers,

* The *Jews* ſuppoſed ſomething very extraordinary and divine in the *letters* which make the word JEHOVAH, and the higheſt profanation for *any* to pronounce them, but the *high-prieſt* once a year; they therefore never wrote or pronounced the word, but ſubſtituted the word ADONAI inſtead of it. And this conceit they carried ſo far, as to imagine that whoever could pronounce them truly, might work miracles, and controul nature at pleaſure. Hence they pretend to account for the power our Saviour had to work miracles by this forged ſtory; that he gaining admiſſion into the temple, ſtole the name JEHOVAH, rightly wrote and pointed, as it ſhould be pronounced, and by virtue of this divine ſecret wrought his miracles, and might have wrought as many as he would.

writers, had such an awful sense of the transcendent excellency of the Great God, and of his jealousy for his own name and honour, that they would not dare to attribute his most sublime titles, characters, and glories to any mere creature, or to any thing which had not true and proper Deity.

THEREFORE to deny these glorious titles, JEHOVAH, LORD GOD, the God *of Israel*, &c. to belong to *Christ*, or to interpret them into such a diminutive sense as may belong to a created being, without unity to Deity, is to deny the most plain and obvious sense and meaning of both the *sacred writers* and *ancient Jews*.

BUT I must remove another difficulty, which some perhaps will reckon insurmountable on this plan. "He who sustains the character of GOD under the Old Testament, often speaks of *another* of an inferior character, and promises to send *him*, which is no other than *Jesus Christ*. Now if *Christ* be the speaker, he must speak of *himself*,—promise to send *himself*, &c."

THE difficulty here is far from being insuperable, if one thing is duly attended to, that wherever he is promised, as the *seed of the woman*,—of *Abraham* or *David*,—as the *righteous branch*,—a *son*, or *servant*,—or whatever other name, they all refer to that part of his œconomical character, in which he appeared to be inferior to GOD, in that state of humiliation he had to undergo for the salvation of mankind. There is therefore no incongruity in his assuming the majesty of *Deity*, and yet foretelling his transactions in that low and abased character, which he was to appear in as the servant of GOD, and Saviour of men. This idea will appear strange,

ſtrange, perhaps, to them who have not accuſtomed themſelves to read the Old Teſtament in that view: But a little ſerious attention will reconcile them to it as a truth, which is intelligible and plain in itſelf.

LET ſuch only conſider theſe paſſages of the Old Teſtament, where *Jeſus Chriſt* under the title of JEHOVAH makes promiſes, and foretels events concerning what he would do for the church in future times, which he (*Jeſus Chriſt*) performed and fulfilled in his own perſon, and are expreſsly applied to him in the New Teſtament. This will clearly ſhew, that while he was ſuſtaining the majeſty of *Deity*, as the GOD and king of *Iſrael*, and ſpeaking of another, (as it would appear at firſt ſight to the inattentive reader) that it was himſelf under another character, in which he was to appear for the fulfilling the great purpoſes of GOD concerning mankind. A few examples will make this abundantly evident.

(*b*) "AND ye ſhall know that I am the LORD your GOD,—I will pour out my Spirit upon all fleſh, and your ſons and your daughters ſhall propheſy,—and whoſoever ſhall call on the name of the LORD (JEHOVAH) ſhall be delivered; for in *Mount Zion* and in *Jeruſalem* ſhall be deliverance, as the LORD hath ſaid; and in the remnant whom the LORD ſhall call." The Apoſtle *Peter* applies the whole of this to that extraordinary effuſion of the Spirit at Pentecoſt, which *Chriſt* had promiſed that *he* would ſend when he went away. And *Paul* expreſsly applies what is ſaid by JEHOVAH in *Joel* to *Jeſus Chriſt*. Having mentioned theſe words,—"Who-

(*b*) Joel ii. 27,—32.

(*i*) "Whoſoever ſhall call on the *name of the Lord*, ſhall be ſaved," he preſently accommodates them to *him* who brought glad tidings of good things to both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, in whom they ſhould believe, which can be no other than (*k*) *Jeſus Chriſt*.

AFTER the Pſalmiſt had given a ſummary of GOD's wonderful works among the children of *Iſrael*, he ſays, (*l*) "This is the hill GOD deſireth to dwell in; JEHOVAH will dwell in it for ever: The chariots of GOD are twenty thouſand,—the LORD is among them as in *Mount Sinai*,—thou haſt aſcended on high, thou haſt led captivity captive, and received gifts for the rebellious alſo, that the LORD GOD might dwell among them." This in the very words of the Plaſmiſt is applied to (*m*) *Jeſus Chriſt* by the Apoſtle.

(*n*) "JEHOVAH reigneth, let the earth be glad,—confounded be they that ſerve graven images: Worſhip *him* all ye GODS." This paſſage points out the glory of the *Gentile* nations, when ſalvation ſhould be brought to them by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and their idolatry deſtroyed by the ſucceſs of his goſpel. Then the commandment is to the GODS to worſhip *him*. It no ways affects the preſent argument, whether the GODS mentioned here, are Angels, or princes of the *Gentiles*; it is plain, that whether or both be meant, they are commanded to worſhip JEHOVAH that reigneth. But the Apoſtle interprets this of *Chriſt*, (*o*) and applies the very words of the Pſalmiſt to him.

AGAIN,

(*i*) Rom x. 12, 13. (*k*) Com. Iſa. lxi. 1, 2. with Luke iv. 17, 18, 19. (*l*) Pſa. lxviii. 7,—18. (*m*) Eph. iv. 7,—11. (*n*) Pſa. xcvii. 1,—7. (*o*) Heb. i. 6.

AGAIN, the Pſalmiſt foretelling the glory of that time, when *Jews* and *Gentiles* ſhould be one church under *Chriſt*, ſays, (*p*) "The heathen ſhall fear the *name* of the LORD, and all kings of the earth thy glory: The LORD ſhall declare his *name* in *Zion*, and his praiſe in *Jeruſalem*, when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms (of the *Gentiles*) to ſerve the LORD. Of old haſt thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou art the ſame, &c. This is alſo applied to (*q*) *Chriſt* by the ſame Apoſtle.

IT is univerſally acknowledged, even by the *Jews*, that the 2d Pſalm is a deſcription of the kingdom and government of the *Meſſiah*. And as kings and governors are there required to yield obedience to him, or be puniſhed for rebellion againſt him, their ſovereign, it is evident, he is not only king in *Zion*, but governor over the heathen to the utmoſt ends of the earth. The way the ſeventy render this paſſage, makes it more plain. (*r*) "But I am appointed king under him, upon his holy hill of *Zion*, to make known the conſtitution of JEHOVAH: For JEHOVAH hath ſaid unto me, &c." From which it appears, that all government was then in the hand of *Chriſt*, as well as it is now, which he affirms himſelf. "The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment (government) unto the *Son*."

THE Pſalmiſt ſays,—"Thou art my king, O GOD, command deliverances for *Jacob*." Pſa. xliv. and in the ſame Pſalm adds, "For thy ſake we are

(*p*) Pſa. cii. 15, 16,—25. (*q*) Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. (*r*) Pſa. ii. 6, 7.

are we killed all the day long, we are counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter." *Paul* cites theſe words, when he is ſhewing how impoſſible it was to ſeparate him and the believing *Romans* from the love of *Chriſt*. Which ſhews that he who was the GOD and *king* of *Iſrael*, is the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, for whoſe ſake the ſaints in *Paul*'s time ſuffered tribulation, diſtreſs, perſecution, &c. Rom. viii. 35, 36.

IT is obvious to every attentive reader, that one of the moſt ſtriking deſcriptions we have concerning GOD in revelation, is given by *Iſaiah*, (*s*) Whoſe glory, ſaith he, filled the earth,—whom ſeraphs adored as LOLD of the whole earth,—who is called the king, the LORD of hoſts. Yet this is applied in the plaineſt terms to *Jeſus Chriſt* by *John*, (*t*) "Theſe things ſaid *Iſaias*, when he ſaw *his glory* and ſpake of him."

(*u*) "THE wilderneſs, and the ſolitary place ſhall be glad, the deſart ſhall rejoice and bloſſom as the roſe, the glory of *Lebanon* ſhall be given to it, the excellency of *Carmel* and *Sharon*, they ſhall ſee the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our GOD. Your GOD will come with a recompenſe, *he* will come and ſave you. The ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped, and the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened, &c." This plainly refers to the miracles wrought by *Chriſt*, and ſo applied by himſelf. (*v*)

(*w*) "BEHOLD, I will ſend *my* meſſenger, and *he* ſhall prepare the way before *me*: And the *Lord*, whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſuddenly come to *his* temple: Even

(*s*) Iſa. vi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. (*t*) John xii. 41. (*u*) Iſa. xxxv. 12. (*v*) Matt. xi. 4, 5. (*w*) Mal. iii. 1.

Even the meſſenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: Behold, *he* ſhall come, ſaith the LORD OF HOSTS." This text is a demonſtrative proof of what I am pleading for, and a fair anſwer to the objection propoſed above. For without admitting that he who is ſpoken of, is alſo the ſpeaker, it is impoſſible to make it good ſenſe, or agreeable to the ſcope of revelation. The *meſſenger* or *Angel* of the covenant, is no other than the *Lord Jeſus*, whoſe way *John* was ſent to prepare; yet the LORD OF HOSTS ſays, "I will ſend MY meſſenger, and he ſhall prepare the way before ME." Therefore the natural meaning is, that the LORD OF HOSTS is declaring how ſoon he would appear in the character of the MESSIAH, who had been often promiſed to the *Jews*, and whom they were at this time waiting and wiſhing for.

I SHALL only add one inſtance more to this purpoſe. The eleventh chapter of *Iſaiah* is a glorious deſcription of the character and kingdom of the *Meſſiah*, there called the ſtem and root of *Jeſſe*. But after we are told what great things he would do in his church, by the SPIRIT JEHOVAH reſting upon him; in the 12th chapter (which ſhould not have been divided from the former, if the ſenſe had been attended to by him that divided them) we are told, what the church would ſay in conſequence of ſuch privileges. "Behold, GOD, my *ſalvation*: I will truſt, and not be afraid; for JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH, is my ſtrength and ſong, he alſo is become my *ſalvation* (JESUS). Therefore with joy ſhall ye draw water out of the wells of ſalvation." This is the great change! He who bore the character of JEHOVAH, is become JESUS *the ſaviour*, whoſe promiſes, character, and work, are wells of ſalvation, out of which his people

ſhall

ſhall for ever draw water with joy. The concluſion is, "ſing to JEHOVAH; for he hath done excellent things: This is known in all the earth. Cry out and ſhout, thou inhabitant of *Zion:* For great is the *holy one of Iſrael* in the midſt of thee." By JEHOVAH becoming JESUS, he loſes neither the titles nor glory due to JEHOVAH. This being ſo plain here, and in many other paſſages, that it will be hard to find what profitable uſe can be made of them, if they are taken in a different point of view.

IT ſeems pretty evident to me, that he who is ſo often called the *holy one of Iſrael*, is the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. The epithet *holy one*, is frequently given him in both Teſtaments. In view of his ſufferings and death, he ſays, (*x*) "My fleſh ſhall reſt in hope, for thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell; neither wilt thou ſuffer thine *holy one* to ſee corruption." This is not ſpoken of *David*, for *Peter* expreſsly tells us, that it was ſpoken (*y*) "of the reſurrection of *Chriſt*." And *Paul* ſays, "it could not be ſaid of *David*, who fell aſleep, was laid unto his fathers, and ſaw corruption: But he (*Jeſus*) whom GOD raiſed again, ſaw no corruption. Thou ſpakeſt in viſion to thy *holy one*, and ſaidſt, I have laid help upon one that is mighty, &c." The ſequel of the Pſalm, and the uſe the Apoſtle makes of the paſſage, ſhew that *Jeſus*, *David*'s *ſeed*, is here intended. (*z*) "I know thee who thou art, the *holy one of God*. But ye denied the *holy one*, and the juſt. But ye have an unction from the *holy one*." This was the ſon of GOD, who is ſo deſigned: Now, *ſon of God*, and *king of Iſrael*,

(*x*) Pſa. xvi. 9, 10. (*y*) Acts ii. 27, 31. ibid. xiii. 35, 36, 37. Pſa. lxxxix. 19. (*z*) Mark i. 24. Acts iii. 14. 1 John ii. 20.

were titles of the ſame perſon. Hence the *Jews* upbraided our LORD upon the croſs, "if thou be the *ſon of God*, come down from the croſs: If he be the *king of Iſrael*, let him come down from the croſs." Perhaps ſome of the ſame multitude, who a little before cried Hoſanna, bleſſed is the king of *Iſrael*, &c. *Nathaniel* is expreſs to this purpoſe, "Rabbi, thou art the *ſon of God*, thou art *the king of Iſrael*." The *ſon of God* is *the king of Iſrael*, who is the ſame with the *holy one of Iſrael*; for theſe are frequently given as titles of the ſame perſon, and even in the ſame verſe, "I am the *Lord*, your *holy one*, the creator of *Iſrael*, your king." With this title is alſo joined that of *redeemer*, which determines who we are to underſtand by the *holy one of Iſrael*. (*a*) "Thus ſaith the *Lord*, the *redeemer of Iſrael*, his *holy one*. For thy maker is thy huſband, (the *Lord* of hoſts is his name) and thy *redeemer*, the *holy one of Iſrael*." The Pſalmiſt ſays, they tempted GOD, and limited the *holy one of Iſrael*; and the Apoſtle ſays, it was *Chriſt* they tempted. Theſe things conſidered, put it beyond doubt, that by the *holy one of Iſrael*, is meant the *Lord Jeſus*, the king and governor of the *Jewiſh Theocracy*.

FROM which it muſt follow, that all the characters that are joined with this, as belonging to the ſame perſon, properly belong to the *Lord Jeſus*. As the name *Jehovah*. (*b*) "Thus ſaith *Jehovah*, the *holy one of Iſrael*, and his maker, &c. As for our redeemer, the *Lord of hoſts* is his name, the *holy one of Iſrael*. The heathen ſhall know that I am the *Lord*, (JEHOVAH) the *holy one of Iſrael*." He

(*a*) Iſa. xlix. 7, and liv. 5. (*b*) Iſa. xlv. 11, and xlviii. 4. Eze. xxxix. 7.

He was the object of *Iſrael*'s worſhip.—(*c*) "Unto thee will I ſing with the harp, O thou *holy one of Iſrael*." He was their defence, hope, and ſtay.—(*d*) "For the LORD is our *defence*: And the *holy one of Iſrael* is our king." Againſt him they ſinned in all their departures from the laws he had given them.—(*e*) "They provoked the *holy one of Iſrael* unto anger. They have caſt away the law of the *Lord of hoſts*, and deſpiſed the word of the *holy one of Iſrael*." This argument, if properly conſidered, will amount to a ſtrong proof of the *Deity of Jeſus Chriſt*, in as much as he was the GOD and governor of *Iſrael*, who had given them laws, and puniſhed them for their frequent rebellions,—whoſe holy preſence they could not endure when diſpoſed to ſin, and therefore cry, "cauſe the *holy one of Iſrael* to ceaſe from before us."

THESE are but a few of the many inſtances that might be given, to which, thoſe in the laſt ſection relating to the ſame ſubject may be added, to ſhew that he who ſpeaks, or is ſpoken of by the ſacred writers, and is called JEHOVAH, LORD GOD, the GOD *and king of Iſrael*, &c. is no other than JESUS CHRIST: For as the ſame things which are ſpoken *of*, or *by him* in the Old Teſtament, under theſe ſacred titles, are applied to *Jeſus Chriſt* in the New Teſtament, it muſt be *him* who bears theſe titles in the Old. And by a ſerious and impartial attention, we will find, that in all the Old Teſtament, eſpecially the Pſalms, and ſome of the Prophets, wherever JEHOVAH, GOD, or any other term by which the ſupreme Being is expreſſed, there is ſomething predicated of him, that is either expreſsly

(*c*) Pſa. lxxi. 22 (*d*) ibid. lxxxix. 18. ſee alſo Iſa. x. 20,—xii. 16,—xvii. 7,—xxix. 19,—xli. 44. (*e*) Iſa. i. 4.—v. 24. ſee chap. xxx. 11, 12.—xxxi 1

expreſsly applied to *Chriſt* in ſome other text, or is a part of his character and office in the œconomy of grace and providence. Take for inſtance, all thoſe epithets given to JEHOVAH of a *rock*, *refuge*, *redeemer*, *deliverer*, *defence*, *ſhepherd*, *ſhield*, *ſtrong hold*, *ſaviour*, *helper*, *healer*, *light*, *leader*, *guide*, *holy one*, *horn of ſalvation*, *hope*, *inheritance*, *law-giver*, *judge*, *king*, &c. all which are ſo many parts of *Chriſt*'s character. And hence, by a *general rule*, which muſt hold, if the ſcriptures are intelligible, the whole Old Teſtament will be found a deſcription of the character and works of JESUS CHRIST.

THAT wherever there is any part of a Pſalm, or other paſſage, applied to *Jeſus Chriſt* in the New Teſtament, as ſpoken either *of*, or *by him* in the Old Teſtament, then, not only the whole of that Pſalm, or other paſſage, but every other Pſalm or paſſage, that is parallel to thoſe which are expreſsly applied to *Chriſt*, muſt as certainly be ſpoken *of*, or *by him*, as that which is expreſsly applied *to him*. If the ſubject be the ſame, or has a relation thereto, the perſon muſt be the ſame who ſpeaks, or is ſpoken of. This is the true *analogy of faith*, to lead into the ſcope and ſenſe of ſcripture, with reſpect to *him* who is the leading ſubject of the whole.

WHAT I have been endeavouring to illuſtrate, would have appeared perfectly clear, if the word rendered *ſalvation* in the Old Teſtament, had been read JESUS, which it really is. As for example, *Iſaiah* ſays,—*(f)* "The LORD JEHOVAH is my ſtrength and ſong, he alſo *is become my ſalvation*, (JESUS). (g) "In that day ſhall this ſong be ſung in

(f) Iſa. xii. 2. (g) ibid. xxvi. 1.

in the land of *Judah*, we have a ſtrong city, ſalvation will GOD appoint for walls and bulwarks." Keep out the words *God* and *for*, which are only ſupplements of the tranſlator, and it reads,—"*Salvation* (JESUS) will appoint walls and bulwarks." It would have been as plain in ſuch texts, of which there is a great number, that JESUS was JEHOVAH the *king of Iſrael*, as that he died and roſe again, appear in the goſpels. The moſt ſtubborn prejudice could not then have denied, that he had an exiſtence before he was conceived of the virgin,—or believed him to be only an inferior Deity. While the Old Teſtament could ſcarcely be opened any where, but they might find him ſpoken of in characters ſuitable only to ALMIGHTY GOD,—Aſcriptions which obviouſly point out Deity, agreeably blended with others, which imply his character and office as the redeemer and Saviour of men. Thus, as EMMANUEL, he is as certainly, tho' not with the ſame *degree* of clearneſs, deſcribed in the Old Teſtament, as in the New, and in ſuch terms as cannot be applied with any propriety to any other but JESUS CHRIST.

I SHALL now only mention a few texts from the New Teſtament, which prove that *Jeſus Chriſt* exiſted as the GOD and king of the church, under the old diſpenſation,—the guide and hope of his people in all ages.

WHEN our LORD told the *Jews*, that "Abraham rejoiced to ſee his day: And he ſaw it, and was glad;" They reckoned it impoſſible, and told him, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and haſt thou ſeen *Abraham*?" Yea, replied our *Lord*, "*before Abraham was*, I AM." He does not deny, that as a man, he appeared to be leſs than fifty years old,

old, but at the ſame time aſſerts his *pre-exiſtence before Abraham*, and in the ſame words, which he did under the title of JEHOVAH, the *God of Iſrael*, to *Moſes*, whom he commanded to ſay, "I AM hath ſent me unto you." And as *Chriſt* oftener than once calls himſelf ſo, after he appeared in fleſh, it cannot be doubted that he is the I AM that ſpoke with *Moſes*.

And this is further clear from what the Apoſtle ſays of *Moſes*, that "he chooſe rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of GOD, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon; eſteeming the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than all the treaſures of *Egypt*." In what ſenſe *Moſes* going with the people of GOD, can be called the *reproach* of CHRIST, without admitting the truth I am pleading for, I cannot underſtand. The reproach of *Chriſt* has always been the ſame. Thoſe who bear it, muſt forſake their attachments to the leading intereſts of this world. As *Moſes* forſook the treaſures of *Egypt*, ſo the Apoſtle exhorts the *Hebrews* to go forth unto *Chriſt* without the camp, bearing his reproach.

THE *Corinthians* are admoniſhed not to tempt *Chriſt*, as ſome of the *Iſraelites* did in the wilderneſs, which certainly ſuppoſes that CHRIST was their leader. *Peter*, ſpeaking of the ſalvation which the ancient believers looked and longed for, ſays, "The Prophets (from *Adam* to that period) propheſied of the grace that ſhould come, ſearching what manner of time the ſpirit of CHRIST which was in them did ſignify, when it teſtified before hand the ſufferings of CHRIST, and the glory that ſhould follow." The ſame *ſpirit of Chriſt*, that taught the Apoſtles in the New Teſtament, inſpired

ſpired the Prophets in the Old. Hence, *Chriſt* is the author of all the religion we have in the Bible: The ſole guide of thoſe who were the choſen inſtruments of publiſhing it: The univerſal ſhepherd of the church,—this is his character in both teſtaments: The door by which Prophets, as well as Apoſtles, Old as well as New Teſtament ſaints have entered into the fold,—by whom they were ſaved, conducted, and inſtructed in the knowledge of GOD. From the firſt to the laſt ſaint on earth, their knowledge of GOD muſt come through this medium,—"*Chriſt the power of God, and the wiſdom of God.*" The power of GOD, in creating all things, and governing them,—in pardoning, ſanctifying, ſupporting, and comforting his people in all ages.—The wiſdom of GOD; not only as he is perfectly acquainted with the whole will of GOD; but as he hath revealed and made it known to men. Hence, ſaid to be "made of GOD unto us wiſdom. In him dwell all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge," perſonally and œconomically. He is not only poſſeſſed of infinite knowledge and underſtanding, whereby he can view the whole length and breadth of the mind and will of GOD, in the moſt perfect manner: But infinite wiſdom and prudence, to execute the purpoſes of GOD in creation, government, and redemption, with unerring fitneſs and ſkill; whereby he brings the will of GOD to the view of intelligent creatures; and for this reaſon is ſo often called in ſcripture the WORD or LOGOS *of God*, a name by which the *Jews* knew him who governed the world in general, and the affairs of their church and nation in particular; and to whom, in the New Teſtament, is aſcribed, the creating and diſpoſal of all things.

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THE Apoſtle's deſcription is ſo plain and full, that it's ſurpriſing any ſhould refuſe to aſſent to this truth. He tells us, that all things in heaven and earth were made by him, and for him: And adds, "he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firſt-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, for it pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell."

IN favour of this cauſe, ſeveral other names which are given to *Jeſus Chriſt*, may be applied with great propriety. As *Alpha* and *Omega*,—the *beginning* and the *ending*,—the *firſt* and the *laſt*. All theſe, I humbly conceive, have an immediate reſpect to his creating and governing all things,—his managing all the diſpenſations of GOD, and bringing them to a glorious concluſion at laſt.

THE word AMEN, which will bear no tranſlation, and is therefore the ſame in all languages, is of the ſame import with "*the truth*," a deſignation which *Chriſt* appropriates to himſelf, denoting that he is the author, as well as the ſcope of all the truth contained in revelation.

THE attentive conſideration of the firſt twelve verſes of *John*'s goſpel, will convince any one of the truth I have been illuſtrating. *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is there called the *Word*, is deſcribed as having exiſtence WITH GOD before any thing elſe exiſted, and his giving exiſtence to all things,—being the *light* and *life* of all in general,—his ancient relation to the *Jewiſh* nation, who are called *his own*,—his divine power in giving the right and privilege of adoption to theſe who are made the children

dren of GOD. That all theſe are ſaid of him, before his appearing in fleſh, is plain from the narrative itſelf, and the way this paragraph is cloſed, by adding, "And the *word* was made FLESH, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, &c." To add this, had been a manifeſt impropriety, if the things formerly ſaid, had not referred to a time prior to his being made fleſh. Beſides, it is further added, "No man hath ſeen GOD at *any time*; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father; he hath declared him." This plainly ſhews, that all the knowledge ever any had of GOD, in *any period* of time, came by him, who, ſince he aſſumed fleſh, is commonly called the *Son of God*.

I AM perſuaded the impartial reader will be ſatisfied from ſo many ſcripture teſtimonies, that *Jeſus Chriſt* not only made the world, but hath governed all things, and the church in particular in all ages,—did all the mighty works, and aſſumed all the titles due only to GOD.

I SHOULD more particularly prove, that the ſaints under both Teſtaments worſhipped him as their GOD and king. Having proved that he was the GOD, and king of *Iſrael*, it follows, that they worſhipped him as ſuch. Nay, they were expreſsly prohibited from worſhipping any other than the *holy one*, who is called the *creator of Iſrael*, and *their king*,—*their redeemer*,—*the king of glory*,—*the king*, *the* LORD *of hoſts*,—the *king of Zion*. All which are applied to *Jeſus Chriſt*, who owns himſelf to be the *king* of the *Jews*: And approves of *Nathaniel*'s addreſs, "Thou art the *Son of God*, thou art the *king of Iſrael*." The proper enjoyment of

theſe titles, by right, gives him the juſteſt claim to the worſhip and praiſes of *Iſrael*.

WHAT evaſion will be found, if inſtances are produced of the propheſies concerning the worſhip that ſhould be given to GOD, literally fulfilled in him; and the moſt ſolemn acts of worſhip immediately directed to him? The Pſalmiſt ſays, "Out of the mouth of babes and ſucklings haſt thou ordained ſtrength, becauſe of thine enemies, &c." This was fulfilled in the moſt ſtriking manner in the praiſes of the children, who cried, "Hoſanna, to the ſon of *David*." Which honour being envied by his enemies, the *Jews*, he refers them to this prophecy in the Pſalms, as fulfilling in their preſence.

AFTER the Pſalmiſt, in a moſt animating deſcription, had ſhewed the beauty and grace of the church, and the majeſty of her *king*, he adds, "The *king* ſhall greatly deſire thy beauty: For he is *thy Lord*, and *worſhip thou him*."

WHATEVER relation that magnificent deſcription in the 72d Pſalm may have to *Solomon*, as the title would inſinuate, I ſhall not determine; but it is certain, the aſcriptions are ſuch as will only ſuit a character that is truely divine. The perpetual and univerſal dominion, mentioned therein, is only applicable to *Chriſt*, whoſe "dominion is an everlaſting dominion, and whoſe kingdom ruleth over all." And what is ſaid concerning the bringing of preſents, and offering gifts by eaſtern kings, was literally accompliſhed at his birth, when the ſages from the (*b*) eaſt preſented their gifts, and *worſhipped him*. "O COME,

(*b*) Matt. ii. 11.

(*c*) "O COME, let us worſhip and bow down: Let us kneel before the LORD (JEHOVAH) our maker: for he is our GOD, and we are the people of his paſture, and the ſheep of his hand: to-day if ye will hear his voice, &c." If the character of a *ſhepherd*, ſo plainly implied here, is reckoned not ſufficient to limit the *worſhip* to *Jeſus Chriſt*, it will certainly put it beyond doubt, when the Apoſtle applies the paſſage expreſsly to him. (*d*)

IN the New Teſtament, we find divine worſhip given him by ſaints, both in earth and heaven. I ſhall not take notice of all the inſtances of worſhip and homage given him by the people, when they were under ſurprize from the greatneſs of his miracles: This, perhaps, would be reckoned by ſome too low a kind of worſhip, to argue the Deity of the object from: But I ſhall ſelect an example or two of divine worſhip ſolemnly directed to him; one is, that remarkable inſtance of *Stephen*, who, when his enemies were ſtoning him to death, could venture his departing ſoul, with every concern of his, in eternity, to the care of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and with his laſt breath, addreſſed him in ſolemn prayer, in behalf of himſelf and his murderers. (*e*) "And they ſtoned *Stephen*, *calling upon*, and ſaying, *Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit*. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, *Lord*, lay not this ſin to their charge." I have omitted the word *God* in this text, becauſe it ſhould not be there; and the *Engliſh* reader will ſee that the tranſlators, who ſupplied it, have been ſo fair as to put it down as a ſupplement. But for what reaſon it ſhould be there at all, is more than any friend

(*c*) Pſa. xcv. 6, 7. (*d*) Heb. iii. 7, 8. and iv. 7. (*e*) Acts vii. 59, 60.

friend to the Deity of *Jeſus Chriſt* can account for, as it weakens the evidence in the text for *Chriſt* being the object of *Stephen*'s worſhip, which is ſo conſpicuous without it, as the greateſt enemy to *Chriſt*'s divinity cannot deny it, if he will admit that *Luke* ſpoke good ſenſe. His words are literally thus, "And they ſtoned *Stephen, crying, Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit.*"

ANOTHER plain text to this purpoſe is, what *Peter* concludes his ſecond epiſtle with. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our *Lord* and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt: To whom be glory, both now and evermore. Amen.*" †

AND the inhabitants of heaven do alſo account the *Lamb* worthy of divine adoration.—(*f*) "And I beheld in the midſt of the throne, a *Lamb*, as it had been ſlain,—and when he had taken the Book, the four Beaſts, and four and twenty Elders *fell down before the Lamb*, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the ſaints,—ſaying, with a loud voice,

(*f*) Rev. v. 6.—14.

† Acts i. 24. "Thou, LORD, who knoweſt the hearts, ſhew whether of theſe two thou haſt choſen, &c." That it was *Chriſt* who is here ſolemnly addreſſed ſeems plain. (1ſt.) From his challenging the ſame perfection of knowing the reins and the hearts, Rev. ii. 23, 27. which is here attributed to him. (2d.) From the ſubject of the petition, viz. the appointing an Apoſtle, which was his office as *Lord* and *head* of the church, and whom *Paul* tellsus, had called him and all the other Apoſtles to their offices.

There are many other texts, which point out the worſhip of *Chriſt*, a few of them I ſhall here cite. Matt. xxviii. 19. Luke xxiv. 51, 52. John v. 22, 23. Acts ix. 13, 14, 21.—15, 17. 1 Cor. i. 2. Acts xix. 13,—iii, 6.—vii. 59. 2 Cor. xii. 8. Phil. ii. 10, 11, 19. Col. iii. 11.—17. 2 Theſſ. ii. 16, 17. 1 Tim. i. 12. 2 Tim. iv. 18, 22. Tit. i. 4. Heb. i. 6. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Rev. v. 6. 8, 9, 10, 12, 13.—vii. 10.

voice, worthy is the *Lamb* that was ſlain, to *receive power*, and *riches*, and *wiſdom*, and *ſtrength*, and *honour*, and *glory*, and *bleſſing*,—and the four Beaſts ſaid, *Amen*. And the four and twenty Elders *fell down and worſhipped him that liveth for ever and ever*." Theſe laſt words are part of the character *Chriſt* took to himſelf in the firſt of the Revelations; and therefore we may conclude, it is he who is meant, when they are ſo often repeated in that book, and always with the higheſt worſhip, adoration, and praiſe aſcribed to him, both by angels and men.

At the cloſe of theſe revelations, *Jeſus*, the divine author of them, certifies *John* concerning the accompliſhment of the events.—(*g*) "He who teſtifieth theſe things, ſaith, ſurely I come quickly." To which *John* replies in a moſt ſolemn addreſs, which every one who is longing for the coming of their Lord will join him in, *Amen*. *Even ſo*, "*come* Lord Jesus."

Were it not that this ſection is too long already, the utility and advantages of this truth might be ſhewed to the right knowledge of revelation, and the practice of religion. It renders many texts plain and agreeable to the general ſcope of ſcripture, which have been tortured with unnatural expoſitions, and been reckoned unintelligible, without the aſſiſtance of figures and metaphors, as *prolepſes* (ſpeaking of things before they were done) or *catachreſes*, (calling God a man, angel, meſſenger, captain, &c. without actual union to human nature) which not one of a hundred that read the Bible knows any thing about. It makes an agreeable

(*g*) Rev. xxii. 20, 21.

agreeable connexion betwixt the Old and New Teſtament, and brings the ſcope of both into an eaſy point of view; and conſequently recommends the duty of ſearching the ſcriptures to the unlearned part of mankind. The multiplicity of interpretations by commentators, and their contrariety, have not only incumbered the ſenſe of many paſſages; but given adverſaries occaſion to inſult, as if the Bible was a volume of abſurd and inconſiſtent things, which muſt diſcourage many ſincere inquirers after truth.

WHEREAS the ſcheme of revealed truth, particularly what relates to *Chriſt*, is harmoniouſly connected; and the further light we get into any part of his character, never fails to ſhed divine brightneſs over all the other parts taken in connexion: The terms which expreſs the character of *Chriſt* become familiar and plain, which have appeared dark, if not unintelligible. When we read of the *light*, *fire*, *bright cloud*, &c. in which GOD ſpake,—of his being *light*,—of his *face*, *preſence*, *glory*, the *power of God*, the *wiſdom of God*, and many others, we know what idea ſhould be prefixed to them, as various parts of *his* character, who has managed all the diſpenſations of providence, grace, and mercy to the children of men.

IT tends greatly to exalt the character of *Chriſt* in our conceptions, as it ſpreads a luſtre over all the parts of his glorious adminiſtration, in the various tranſactions recorded in revelation. The more we are acquainted with his government, the more juſt honour will we put upon him: And be more compleatly furniſhed with anſwers to the adverſaries of his proper Deity,—ſupport this part of our chriſtian profeſſion,—vindicate the honours of our

our bleſſed *Lord*,—invite ſuch as have oppoſed it through the prejudice of education, and others who are ignorant through inattention to embrace the truth.

It muſt alſo raiſe our views of his wiſdom and and power to admiration. There have been many mighty monarchies upon earth, but none in a proper ſenſe could ever be called univerſal, but that of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who has without interruption been ſupreme ruler over all. He alone continued to reign in ſpite of death itſelf, which puts a period to the rule of other monarchs. In infinite wiſdom, and uncontroulable power he has managed all nations, in all their various viciſſitudes that have been upon earth, without neglecting the intereſts of every individual in the univerſal ſyſtem. And tho' the reaſonable part of his ſubjects have always acted as free agents, yet, by the providence of this ſupreme ruler, every thing has been ſo directed, as to anſwer the great ends of his government, which extends to the moſt minute actions. Nor hath the change of times or circumſtances,—oppoſition greater or leſſer, ever made the leaſt defect in the unalterable principles on which he carries on his government, as well over the intellectual powers of the mind, as the external actions of the body.

His paternal love and care over his church, appear in moſt lively colours, through all the periods of his adminiſtration: Counterplotting *Satan*, the declared enemy of his people, by means every way ſuited to their ſalvation and ſafety,—raiſing up one Prophet after another,—and frequently honouring them with appearances and manifeſta-

tions

tions of himſelf for their direction and comfort. Thus actually rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and delighting to converſe with the ſons of men: And in the fulneſs of time, condeſcended ſo low, as to diveſt himſelf of the *form* of *God*, the glorious *Shickinah*, in which he appeared, ſpoke, and acted in the character *of God*; and take upon him the *form* of a ſervant,—make himſelf of no reputation, and ſubmit to the ignominious death of the croſs. Here the *Devil*, and the powers of this world, his combined enemies, were permitted to wreck all the premeditated vengeance which their helliſh cunning could invent, or their tyranny could execute. Notwithſtanding, he ſhewed their wiſdom to be folly, and their power impotence; he triumphed over death, the *Devil*, and all his agents: Roſe from the dead,—eſtabliſhed upon the foundation of his own blood, the unerring plan of his future government, and perpetual reign over a kingdom of kings and prieſts, who ſhall for ever triumph in him as their king, who hath taken unto him his great power, and doth, and ſhall for ever reign.

PART

PART II.

SECT. I.

IN this second part, I shall endeavour to shew that the *names*, or relative characters, FATHER, SON, and WORD, HOLY GHOST, or SPIRIT, are descriptive of the distinct parts they sustain in the DIVINE OECONOMY,‡ revealed in the *sacred word*.

O THE

‡ The word ŒCONOMY, so frequently used in this work, especially in the two last parts, is compounded of two *Greek* words, OIKOS, which signifies a *house*, and NOMOS, which signifies a *rule* or *law*. In its sense, it is a scriptural phrase, used by GOD himself, Eze. xliii. 10, 11, 12. "Thou son of man, shew the *house* to the house of *Israel*,—shew them the *laws* thereof,—and all the *ordinances* thereof. Behold, this is the LAW OF THE HOUSE." OECONOMY, or what GOD hath revealed concerning his house, the church. The ideas commonly prefixed to it in *English* are, (1) The management or government of a family or house. (2) Good husbandry, or frugality in expence. (3) The method used in governing or ruling. (4) The disposition or arrangement of the parts of a work. (5) The taking measures rightly for giving a fabric a convenient form. When I speak of the *divine œconomy*, I include the most of these ideas, as far as they have any relation

THE divine ſcheme of religion, which is only known by revelation, was gradually opened up from one period to another throughout the Old Teſtament. At different times GOD furniſhed his people with freſh diſcoveries concerning himſelf. Every age was bleſt with ſome new revelation of his character, which, like the morning light, ſhined more and more, until the noon-day glory, manifeſted in the New Teſtament, by the ſun of righteouſneſs, the LORD JESUS CHRIST: Whoſe coming was foretold in every age, from the time that the original pair reſided in paradiſe, to the preaching of *John the Baptiſt*, his immediate fore-runner.

AMONG the many ſublime things, ſaid by the Prophets concerning him, and the peculiar advantages that ſhould attend the diſpenſation of his goſpel, I have often admired the beauty of *Iſaiah*'s deſcriptions; in one of which, when ſpeaking of the privileges the kingdom of *Chriſt* ſhould enjoy, he ſays,

lation to what GOD hath revealed concerning the order and government of his works in general, and the church in particular, which in ſcripture is called *his houſe*: Or the whole of GOD's revealed diſpenſation concerning Angels and men: And by OECONOMICAL, I underſtand, what belongs to the regulation or management of that diſpenſation. Hence this term, in its ſignification, points out the terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, *as relative names, graciouſly aſſumed in ſovereign condeſcenſion in carrying on the great plan revealed by God in his word*: And is oppoſed to the common notion of theſe names, being *natural* or *neceſſary*, and *eſſential* in Deity, which at once deſtroys the freedom and ſovereignty of GOD in all his diſpenſations, which have any relation to theſe names.

This much I thought neceſſary, for the ſake of ſuch readers as might not be acquainted with the meaning of the word OECONOMY, and in what ſenſe it is applied to this ſubject. And, I earneſtly deſire the reader, before he goes further, to have a clear conception of the idea deſigned by the uſe of the word, and carry it along with him attentively, in the further conſideration of this work.

ſays, (*a*) "It ſhall bloſſom abundantly, and rejoice, even with joy and ſinging; the glory of *Lebanon* ſhall be given into it; the excellency of *Carmel* and *Sharon*." Then he introduces a ſurpriſing climax! Not only ſhould the ſubſtance of the moſt lively ſhadows among the *Jews* be the privilege of this kingdom, even their temple and conſecrated things, which they boaſted of as the glory of *Lebanon*, *Carmel*, and *Sharon*: But, as if theſe were ſmall things, he aſcends to the quinteſſence of excellency and glory.—"They ſhall ſee the *glory* of the LORD (JEHOVAH) the *excellency* of our GOD (ELOHIM)." A more glorious diſcovery than the moſt ſtriking appearance of the *Jewiſh* temple. They ſhould ſee him who is the divine *medium*, that repreſents all the infinite perfections of JEHOVAH,—"They ſhall ſee the *glory* of JEHOVAH." Him, whoſe character and work exhibit the glorious relations in which the *divine three* are made known to the church:—"They ſhall ſee the *excellency* of ELOHIM."

WHEN we conſider *Jeſus Chriſt* as the *medium* of that knowledge we have of the divine perfections, our ideas are confined to the notion of *unity*: For we cannot ſuppoſe more than *one* poſſeſſed of infinite perfections or attributes. So that whatever we learn of divine perfections manifeſted in *Chriſt*, leads us to the unity of JEHOVAH, who alone is *infinite*, *unchangeable*, and *eternal*. But when we learn the revealed relations GOD ſtands in to us, which are alſo made known in *Chriſt*, revelation leads us to the knowledge of a *plurality* pointed out in the word ELOHIM, and clearly expreſſed in three particular *relative names* or *characters*,

(*a*) Iſa. xxxv. 2.

racters, which confine our ideas to the notion of a *plurality*. To each of the three, revelation aſcribes a particular work, in the execution of the divine purpoſes concerning men. In this Oeconomy there is an inequality of character, a manifeſt ſubordination among the divine three, which muſt be limited to the NAMES they bear,—the WORK which revelation aſſigns to each, in the plan of redemption,—or to the RELATION each ſtands in to mankind, as the objects of that redemption.

IN this reſpect, we may ſafely, being agreeable to revelation, conſider a ſuperiority and inferiority among the three, who, with relation thereto are called *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*. Notwithſtanding, this revealed diſtinction does by no means deſtroy the unity of *Deity*; nor does this œconomical ſubordination deſtroy the equality of the divine three; that is conſpicuouſly ſupported throughout the ſcriptures, which aſcribe to each the *names*, *attributes*, *works*, and *worſhip*, proper only to *Deity*, and which would be derogatory to the wiſdom and honour of GOD, to allow any being but what is purely divine.

WITH reſpect to theſe, the wiſdom of GOD is peculiarly diſplayed, in the manner of ſcripture phraſeology, and in no inſtance that I remember more than in the phraſe, ſo very common in the Old Teſtament, LORD GOD, or JEHOVAH ELOHIM: Which at the ſame time points out a *plurality* in the word ELOHIM, and the *equality* of that plurality, by being expreſſed in the *ſame term*. This would be very incongruous, if there were the leaſt *inequality* among theſe implied in the term. And all is conſiſtent with the *unity* of *Deity*, expreſſed in the word JEHOVAH. So that the divine *unity*, *plurality*,

plurality, *equality*, or *ſameneſs*, are all pointed out in the expreſſion JEHOVAH ELOHIM. But the reader will ſuffer me to clear this a little further, as it has an immediate relation to the ſubject in hand.

AS it is very certain that the plural ELOHIM is not uſed by chance, but is the fruit of *choice*, and ſo muſt be ſignificant, the greateſt care is taken in ſcripture to prevent *polytheiſm* from being grafted on an expreſſion which ſeems ſo naturally to lead to it. Therefore that text, "Hear, O *Iſrael*, JEHOVAH, our ELOHIM, is ONE JEHOVAH," was to be of the greateſt moment among the *Jews*: They were to lay it up in their heart,—cauſe their children to learn it,—write it on the poſts of their houſes, and front of their gates,—wear it as a ſign upon their arms, and frontlets between their eyes,—ſo important, that all their laws were uſhered in with it. And the value of this precept to that people, appears further from what our LORD ſays of it, when interrogated, Which was the *firſt* and *greateſt* commandment? he readily gave the preference to this, as the firſt and higheſt of the law, "Hear, O *Iſrael*, JEHOVAH, our ELOHIM, is ONE JEHOVAH."

NOW, as the noun JEHOVAH is ſingular, and has no plural, there was not the leaſt occaſion for ſo ſolemn a declaration, that JEHOVAH is *one*,—is no *plural*, if it were not for the plural word ELOHIM, which might lead into a miſtake; to prevent which, this ſolemn declaration was given, and ſo many inſtructions concerning the importance of it, that they might never forget, tho' there were diſtinct ELOHIM, yet but *one* JEHOVAH; which is allowing a plurality, but not of diſtinct Deities, for JEHOVAH is *one*. THO'

THO' the unity of JEHOVAH is expreſsly ſettled by this, and many other texts, yet we read of diſtinct agents to whom the name and perfections of JEHOVAH are aſcribed; as the *Name* JEHOVAH, the *Word* JEHOVAH, the *Angel* JEHOVAH, the *Spirit* JEHOVAH. And however unwilling the *Jews* and ſome others are to ſee the particular emphaſis in the plural ELOHIM, it is moſt certain, the word itſelf carries ſome idea in it, deſcriptive of ſome *character*, ſome *relation*, the being deſcribed by that name bears to man. This is plain from the uſe made of it in ſcripture, where the relatives *my*, *thy*, *our*, *their*, *his*, &c. are commonly joined with ELOHIM.

AS the word implies *relation*, it ſhould have been tranſlated by ſome word that pointed out that ſenſe. But it is rendered by GOD or GODS, which, as far as we know by the derivation, carries no idea of relation to us, or to any being elſe. If the word GOD is uſed as a ſound only, to raiſe the idea of the infinite, eternal Being, without any ſignificant meaning in itſelf; then the applying that word by the relatives, *my*, *thy*, *his*, *their*, &c. is improper; for the eternal Being, abſolutely conſidered, has no more relation to one, than another. If the term ever had any ſignification of relation originally, it has been loſt before the *Septuagint* tranſlation. Nor do we know any meaning the *Saxon* word GOD has, but to denote the ſupreme Being. ELOHIM ſhould either have been tranſlated by a word that ſignified *relation*, or retained the *Hebrew* term, rendering it *totidem literàs*, giving the ſame letters in the tranſlation as are done in proper names. If this would have partly left men in the dark, it would have been ſtill ſafer than to be ſo miſled by an authority which is too implicitly followed.

THO'

THO' a divine plurality is very clearly pointed out in the Old Teſtament, in a variety of expreſſions, which cannot be properly interpreted otherwiſe: Yet this is one glory peculiar to the New Teſtament, that this plurality are clearly diſtinguiſhed by the different names, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, which appears neceſſary in the further execution of the divine plan, at the commencement of that period, and gives the cleareſt diſcovery to men, of the diſtinct parts they acted with relation to men, in the great tranſaction agreed among the ELOHIM.

HE, who, in the *New* Teſtament, is known by the name *Jeſus Chriſt*, did under the *Old* govern all things, particularly the *Jewiſh Theocracy*, aſſuming the names and glory of JEHOVAH, the GOD, *king*, and *holy one of Iſrael*. And as to what is ſaid concerning the humble character he afterwards aſſumed, it is expreſſed in *promiſes*, *prophecies*, *figures*, or *ſhadows*, which reſpected ſome future time, and were all fulfilled in him, whoſe character and offices taken together, is the ſubſtance of the New Teſtament.

WHEN the fulneſs of time was come, for him to act that part in the divine œconomy, ſo full of wonder and unſpeakable condeſcention, he became fleſh,—ſubjected himſelf to the meaneſt circumſtances,—the loweſt abaſement,—the greateſt reproach and contempt,—and endured the moſt bitter ſufferings: Or, as the Apoſtle finely expreſſes this aſtoniſhing part of his conduct, as the great pattern of humility to chriſtians in all ages. (*b*) "Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in CHRIST

(*b*) Phil. ii. 5—8.

CHRIST JESUS: Who being in the *form of God*, thought it not robbery to be *equal with God*: But *made himſelf* of *no reputation*, and took upon him the *form of a ſervant*, and was made in the *likeneſs of men*: And being found in *faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf*, and *became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs*." Thus he appeared in the humble character of the obedient SON and SERVANT of GOD, *who*, from that period, in the divine œconomy, ſuſtains the name of the *Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and our *Father* in him.

AS to the *Holy Ghoſt*, in the Old Teſtament he is generally called the SPIRIT JEHOVAH; but under the New, his character is clearly pointed out in the great buſineſs of man's ſalvation, by the *appellations*, *miſſion*, and *works*, aſcribed to him as a diſtinct agent from the *Father* and the *Son*.

THUS, this great point is repreſented in revelation, in which we are certified, that it ſhall continue ſo, 'till the ſacred drama is finiſhed on the theatre of this world, when *Jeſus Chriſt* ſhall deliver up his great charge to GOD the Father, his œconomical adminiſtration being come to an end; then ſays the Apoſtle, " when all things are *placed in order*, (as the text ſhould read) GOD ſhall be all in all."

WERE theſe, and other ſentiments of the ſame kind, purſued to their proper length with true chriſtian prudence, and an impartial attention, the clouds of human inventions that have darkened this doctrine for ages paſt, would ſoon diſpel, and the minds of inquirers be ſatisfied from revelation, where GOD hath expreſſed it in ſuch terms, as were every way agreeable to the different parts of the great

great plan he was carrying forward, and ſufficiently clear to convey all the ideas concerning it, which he intended thoſe in the early, or us in the latter periods of time ſhould know.

BUT inſtead of being ſatisfied with the ideas which revelation affords, it has been common for ſuch as have handled this ſubject, to deviſe other rules of interpretation than are found there, conſequently, their concluſions are of the ſame kind with the premiſes they are built upon,—*human conjecture.*

AS the names *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, import and define ſomething relating to the adorable *three*; it has been commonly, as well as zealouſly maintained for many ages, by thoſe who are too much attached to human compoſitions, "That theſe names are given to deſcribe to us in what manner three divine perſons exiſt in one God-head: Or, to ſhew ſomething natural, neceſſary, and eſſential to each of them as divine perſons, that is not proper or applicable to the other perſons, as they ſubſiſt in God-head."

BUT theſe propoſitions are not only unſcriptural, but unintelligible in the conceptions of mankind; as there is nothing in revelation or nature to regulate our inquiries of ſuch a kind, or ground any concluſions upon. GOD has never revealed that incomprehenſible myſtery of his nature, or the manner of his exiſtence to creatures. And it is more than probable, that, if GOD ſhould pleaſe to make a revelation thereof, we could not be capable to underſtand it, unleſs he would at the ſame time think fit to beſtow on us ſome new powers or faculties of the mind, which we want at preſent.

The nature of the *union*, and *diſtinction* of the *plurality* in *Deity* as to the *manner*, is utterly unknown to mankind.

THERE is no neceſſity for men to wade in the depths of myſtery for knowledge, where GOD has given no rule to direct them. The terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, are plain intelligible characters, in which the divine Three have diſcovered themſelves, to deſcribe in what manner they have acted in executing the divine purpoſes, and particularly in carrying on the plan of redemption. This will appear evident, from the conſideration of the ſcripture account of theſe terms, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, diſtinctly viewed.

IN all the texts where *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, or any two of them, are mentioned as diſtinct from each other, if the ſcope is attended to, it will appear, that they are not diſtinguiſhed as being of a different *nature*, or with reſpect to their *Deity*;—or in the leaſt to teach us the manner of their *exiſtence*; but only in conſideration of the ſeveral parts they are repreſented as ſuſtaining in the creation, government, redemption, and ſanctification of mankind.

THE word *Father*, as applied to GOD in general, is a figurative term, expreſſing the relation between the great creator of all things, and his creatures: But can prove nothing concerning the *manner* in which the creator exiſts. If the term *Father* was an eſſential, internal character, peculiar to one, to denote the particular manner of his perſonal and divine ſubſiſtence in Deity, (as is ſuppoſed) then this term would be proper to *one only*, excluſive of the other two. But revelation teacheth us, that

that in many places where the term Father is uſed, *all* that is divine muſt be included, and not a word to point out one *only* of the divine three; but refers to GOD as the maker and conſerver of his creatures, in which ſenſe it belongs to all the three, who, in this reſpect, are *one*.

OUR LORD teaches his diſciples to addreſs the divine Being, under the character of *Father*,—(*a*) "Our *Father*, who art in heaven." It cannot be denied, that all that is divine, and properly the object of worſhip, is included in the word *Father* here; but *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, are included in the object of worſhip; therefore, they muſt be included in the term *Father* in this, as well as in the following texts.—(*b*) "Have we not all *one Father*?—(*c*) But to us there is but one GOD, the *Father*, of whom are all things.—(*d*) "One GOD and *Father* of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.—(*e*) Shall we not much rather be in ſubjection unto the *Father* of ſpirits, and live?"

JEHOVAH, as an evidence of his boundleſs grace and benevolence, hath condeſcended to come under the endearing relation of a *Father*, in a ſpecial manner, to his elect children.—(*f*) "And will be a *Father* unto you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the LORD ALMIGHTY.—(*g*) But ye have received the ſpirit of adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba*, *Father*." He is alſo a Father to the man *Chriſt Jeſus*, which he manifeſted in fixing his love upon him.—(*h*) "Behold, my ſervant, whom I up-

(*a*) Matt. vi. 9. (*b*) Mal. ii. 10. (*c*) 1 Cor. viii. 6. (*d*) Eph. iv. 6. (*e*) Heb. xii. 9. (*f*) 2 Cor. vi. 18. (*g*) Rom. viii. 15. (*h*) Iſa. xlii. 1. com. with Matt. xii. 18.

I uphold, mine elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth." This is applied to *Chriſt* by *Matthew*.

BUT if we find that *Jeſus Chriſt* bears the name *Father*, it will certainly prove, that it is not peculiar to *one*, and ſo cannot in any ſenſe be deſcriptive of the manner he ſubſiſts in Deity. It was proved above, that *Jeſus Chriſt* governed the church in the wilderneſs, of whom *Moſes* ſays,—(*i*) "Is he not thy *Father* that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and eſtabliſhed thee?" *Iſaiah* is expreſs to this purpoſe.—(*k*) "Unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon is given, (which is no other than *Jeſus Chriſt*) and his name ſhall be called,—the *everlaſting Father*. (*l*) Doubtleſs thou art our *Father*,—thou, O LORD, art our *Father*, our redeemer, thy name is from everlaſting." The *Alpha* and *Omega* (*Jeſus Chriſt*) aſſumes the character of *Father*, when he ſays,—(*m*) "He that overcometh, ſhall inherit all things, and I will be his GOD, and he ſhall be my *Son*." In like manner it is ſaid,—(*n*) "They are the *children* of GOD, being the children of the reſurrection." But *Chriſt* ſays, "I am the reſurrection and the life." Therefore he is their GOD and *Father*, and they are *his children*. Hence it appears, that the term *Father*, is not given to diſtinguiſh one from another, as they ſubſiſt in Deity: But is rather a term of relation between GOD and man, which will be very evident, by conſidering in what ſenſe GOD is called a *Father* in ſcripture.

THE ſenſe of the term *Father*, as applied to GOD, muſt be learned by analogy, or we can have no

(*i*) Deut. xxxii. 6. (*k*) Iſa. ix. 6. (*l*) ibid. lxiii. 16. (*m*) Rev. xxi. 7. (*n*) Luke xx. 36.

no knowledge thereof at all. This is one great evidence, how far the divine Being hath condeſcended to the weak capacities of men, in making himſelf known to them in a language which hath analogy to what they know among themſelves. And tho' the analogy in many reſpects is but faint, yet where there is none, ideas muſt fail, and inquiries ſhould ceaſe, in ſuch terms as *Father*, applied to GOD. What knowledge we pretend to more, if it is not revealed in ſo many plain words, is mere uncertainty, and cannot be reckoned any part of that ſyſtem of neceſſary truth which GOD intended to teach us.

GOD is called a *Father*, becauſe he is the creator of all things; he brought them into being and exiſtence,—preſerves them by his power,—and ſuſtains them by his bounty.—(*a*) "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; for we are all his offſpring. (*b*) Have we not all one Father? Hath not one GOD created us all? (*c*) He maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil, and on the good, and ſendeth his rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt."

AS children bear the image of their Father, ſo GOD made man in *his image*.—(*d*) "For man is the image and glory of GOD. (*e*) In the image of GOD made he him."

THEY are called *Fathers* in ſcripture, who were the firſt inventors of things which were for the general benefit of mankind. This idea may with great propriety be included in the character of GOD as a *Father*, who, through infinite wiſdom, found out a method to ſave ſinners,—renew his

(*a*) Acts xvii. 18. (*b*) Mal. ii. 10. (*c*) Matt. v. 45. (*d*) 1 Cor. xi. 7. (*e*) Gen. i. 27.

his image in them,—and reſtore them to the enjoyment of his favour, which they were ſo unmeet for by ſin,—and all conſiſtent with the abſolute ſtrictneſs of his law, and the divine purity of his revealed perfections.

BESIDES ſuch general ideas of paternity, it will be found, that there is no property or affection which fathers, as ſuch among men, are endowed with, that is not aſcribed to GOD, as the Father of his children, which he hath choſen in *Chriſt Jeſus*. Reſpect muſt be had here to the great difference there is betwixt a property or affection in men, and the ſame thing as it is applied to GOD. But where the ſcriptures lead, we may ſafely follow.

THEY are called FAHTERS, who adopt children into their family, and give them the title and privilege of children; in this reſpect GOD is called a FATHER.—(*f*) "Bleſſed be the GOD and Father of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*,—who hath predeſtinated us into the *adoption of children* by *Jeſus Chriſt* to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, &c. (*g*) Behold what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the *ſons of* GOD.—(*h*) And will be a FATHER unto you, and ye ſhall be my *ſons* and *daughters*, ſaith the LORD Almighty."

HE is their FATHER, as he *begets* them again by the energy of truth,—makes them to bear his *name*,—and conforms them to the image of his *only begotten ſon*.—(*i*) "Bleſſed be the GOD and Father of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, who, according to his

(*f*) Eph. i. 3,—5. (*g*) 1 John iii. 1. (*h*) 2 Cor. vi. 18. (*i*) 1 Pet. i. 3.

his abundant mercy, hath *begotten us again* unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt* from the dead. (*k*) Of his own will *begat he us* with the word of truth. (*l*) And I looked, and lo, a Lamb ſtood on *Mount Zion*, and with him a hundred and forty and four thouſand, having *his father's name* written in their foreheads. (*m*) He that overcometh, I will write upon him the *name of my* GOD,—new *Jeruſalem*, which cometh down out of heaven from my GOD: *And* MY NEW NAME."

AS a Father he feeds them with ſpiritual food, —(*n*) "My *Father* giveth you the true bread from heaven."

HE has the *love* of a Father to them; and permits them to have the freedom and fellowſhip of children with him.—(*o*) "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my *father* will *love* him. (*p*) The *Father* himſelf *loveth* you. (*q*) Truly our *fellowſhip* is with the *Father*, and with his ſon *Jeſus Chriſt*."

HE bears with their weakneſſes, and forgives their offences.—(*r*) "And I will ſpare them as a man ſpareth his *ſon* that ſerveth him.—(*s*) Your heavenly *Father* will alſo *forgive* you."

HE has the *ſympathy*, *care*, and *tenderneſs* of a *father*.—(*t*) "Like as a Father *pitieth* his children: So the LORD pitieth them that fear him. (*u*) Even the very *hairs* of your head are all numbered. (*v*) A FATHER of the *Fatherleſs*, and a judge of the widow, is GOD." HE

(*k*) Jam. i. 18. (*l*) Rev. xiv. 1. (*m*) ibid. iii. 12. (*n*) John vi. 32. (*o*) ibid. xiv. 23. (*p*) and xvi. 27. (*q*) 1 John i. 3. (*r*) Mal. iii. 17. (*s*) Matt. vi. 14. (*t*) Pſa. ciii. 13. (*u*) Luke xii. 7. (*v*) Pſa. 68. 5.

HE is acquainted with all their wants, and giveth them all neceſſary things.—(*w*) "Your heavenly FATHER *knoweth* that ye have need of all *theſe things*. (*x*) How much more ſhall your FATHER, who is in heaven, give *good things* to them that aſk him."

HE *corrects* them in love when they offend.—(*y*) "What ſon is he whom the FATHER chaſteneth not? (*z*) I will viſit their tranſgreſſions with the *rod*, and their iniquities with *ſtripes*."

HE is a *pattern* to all his children.—(*a*) "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your FATHER who is in heaven is perfect."

HE challengeth paternal authority and reſpect.—(*b*) "If I be a FATHER, where is mine honour?"

HE inſpects the deportment of his children, and rewards them accordingly.—(*c*) "Thy FATHER who *ſeeth* thee in ſecret, himſelf ſhall *reward* thee openly."

HE provides an *inheritance* for them,—gives it *freely* to them,—and makes them all *meet* for the enjoyment thereof.—(*d*) "Come, ye bleſſed of my FATHER, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. (*e*) It is your FATHER's *good pleaſure* to give you the kingdom. (*f*) We give thanks to the FATHER, who hath made us *meet* for the inheritance of the ſaints in light."

HE

(*w*) Matt. vi. 32. (*x*) ibid. vii, 11. (*y*) Heb. xii. 7. (*z*) Pſa. lxxxix. 32. (*a*) Matt. v. 48. (*b*) Mal. i. 6. (*c*) Matt. iv. 6. (*d*) ibid. xxv. 34. (*e*) Luke xii. 32. (*f*) Col. i. 12.

HE hears their humble prayers, and anſwers them.—(*g*) "As touching any thing that they ſhall aſk, it ſhall be done for them of my FATHER, who is in heaven. (*h*) How much more ſhall your heavenly FATHER give the holy ſpirit to them that aſk him."

HE is the object of their worſhip.—(*i*) "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our FATHER, who art in heaven. (*k*) The true worſhippers ſhall worſhip the FATHER in ſpirit and truth: For the FATHER ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him."

THESE, and many other privileges they enjoy, through the *well-beloved* SON *of* GOD, by whom they have the knowledge of their FATHER, and in whom they approach acceptably to him.—(*l*) "No man knoweth the FATHER but the SON, and he to whom the SON will reveal him.—(*m*) I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the FATHER but by me. (*n*) Through him we have acceſs by one ſpirit, unto the FATHER."

WITH reſpect to *Jeſus Chriſt*, the ſcripture repreſents GOD as a FATHER, in his being GOD's *firſt-born*,—† his image,—the *head* of all his ways,—the repoſitory of all his purpoſes,—in the *ancient love* he had to him,—the choice he made of him, and all the elect in him.—(*o*) "Giving thanks to

† By reſemblance and repreſentation, for it is a contradiction in terms, to ſay a *Son* as ſuch, can be the *image* of his *father* as ſuch. *Filiation* is no image of *Paternity*; they are ſpecifically different, and can no more be the image of one another, than light can be the image of darkneſs.

(*g*) Matt. xviij. 19. (*h*) Luke xi. 18. (*i*) Matt. vi. 9. (*k*) John iv. 23. (*l*) Matt. xi. 27. (*m*) John xiv. 6. (*n*) Eph. ii. 18. (*o*) Col. i. 12, 13, 15.

the FATHER,—who hath tranſlated us into the kingdom of his *dear* SON (*marg.* the SON *of his love*)—who is the *image* of the inviſible GOD, the *firſt-born* of every creature. (*p*) I will make him, my *firſt-born*, higher than the kings of the earth. (*q*) But thou, *Bethlehem Ephratah*, though thou be little among the thouſands of *Judah*, out of thee ſhall *he* come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in *Iſrael*: Whoſe *goings forth* have been from of old, from everlaſting." (*r*) This is applied to *Chriſt* both by *Matthew* and *John*. (*s*) The LORD poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old. I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was, —then I was by him, as one *brought up with him*: And I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. (*t*) Bleſſed be the GOD and Father of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places, *in Chriſt*. According as he hath *choſen us in* HIM, before the foundation of the world. (*u*) According to the eternal purpoſe, which he purpoſed in *Chriſt Jeſus* our LORD. According to his own purpoſe and grace, which was given us *in Chriſt Jeſus*, before the world began."

WITH reſpect to *Chriſt*'s birth of the virgin, and appearance in this world in fleſh.—(*v*) "The HOLY GHOST ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the higheſt ſhall over-ſhadow thee: Therefore, alſo that holy thing which ſhall be *born of thee*, ſhall be called *the* SON *of* GOD. He ſhall be great, and ſhall be called *the* SON *of the higheſt*. (*w*) And the word was made fleſh, and dwelt among

(*p*) Pſa. lxxxix. 27. (*q*) Mic. v. 2. (*r*) Matt. ii. 6. John vii. 42. (*s*) Prov. viii. 22.—31. (*t*) Eph. i. 3, 4. (*u*) Ibid. iii. 11. (*v*) Luke i. 3, 5, 35. (*w*) John i. 14.

among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the *only begotten* of the FATHER) full of grace and truth."

As a Father commits the charge of all his affairs to his *only* SON; ſo the Son of GOD is made governor over all things.—(*x*) "The LORD (JEHOVAH) hath ſaid unto *me*, thou art *my* SON, this day I have begotten thee. Aſk of me, and I will give thee the heathen for *thine inheritance*, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for *thy poſſeſſion*. (*y*) Unto us a SON is given,—and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulders:—of the increaſe of his government and peace, there ſhall be no end. (*z*) All things are delivered unto me of my Father. (*a*) The FATHER judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement (government) to the SON. The Father loveth the SON, and hath given *all things into his hand*."

As a FATHER, he owns and makes known *Jeſus Chriſt as his* SON. (*b*) "This is my beloved ſon, in whom I am well pleaſed. (*c*) *Simon Peter* ſaid, thou art *Chriſt* the SON of the living GOD. *Jeſus* anſwered,—fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, who is in heaven."

As a Father, he *ſent* the Son to fulfil his will in accompliſhing the work of redemption,—prepared him for that great work,—ſupported and inſtructed him therein,—and rewarded him after it was finiſhed.—(*d*) "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the *will* of him that *ſent me*.

(*x*) Pſa. ii. 7, 8. (*y*) Iſa. ix. 6, 7. (*z*) Matt. xi. 27. (*a*) John v. 22. ibid. iii. 35. (*b*) Matt. iii, 17. (*c*) ibid. xvi. 16, 17. (*d*) John vi. 38.

me. (*e*) Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he ſaith, ſacrifice and offering thou wouldſt not, but a *Body* haſt thou *prepared me:* Then, ſaid I, Lo, I come to do *thy will,* O GOD. (*f*) Say ye of him, whom the Father hath *ſanctified,* and *ſent* into the world, thou blaſphemeſt; becauſe, I ſaid, I am the SON *of* GOD. (*g*) He ſhall cry unto me, thou art my FATHER, my GOD, and the *rock* of *my ſalvation.* I have found *David, my ſervant:* With my holy oil have I *anointed him,* with whom my hand ſhall be eſtabliſhed: Mine arm ſhall alſo *ſtrengthen* him. (*h*) I do nothing of myſelf; but as the Father hath *taught* me, I ſpeak theſe things. (*i*) He humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs, wherefore GOD alſo hath *highly exalted* him, and given him a name above every name; that at the name of *Jeſus* every knee ſhould bow, &c."

TO theſe we might add manifold inſtances, where *Chriſt* addreſſes GOD as his FATHER, in behalf of himſelf,—his friends,—and his enemies. We might turn to *Paul*'s epiſtles for illuſtration of this ſubject, where one thing is remarkable, that in his ſalutations at the beginning of every epiſtle, he carefully ſupports the diſtinction betwixt GOD as a FATHER, and *Jeſus Chriſt* as a SON. And to conclude all, tells us, that when he ſhall have finiſhed the whole adminiſtration, which GOD hath entruſted him with, *as his* SON, and brought all whom the Father gave him to glory, then he ſhall deliver up the kingdom to GOD his FATHER, and GOD ſhall be all in all. The executive part of the divine oeconomy being finiſhed,—there is no further

(*e*) Heb. x. 5, 6. (*f*) John x. 36. (*g*) Pſa. lxxxix. 26, 20, 21. (*h*) John viii. 28. (*i*) Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10.

further uſe for the oeconomical authority and ſubjection, the ſuperiority and inferiority implied in the *paternal* and *filial* characters.*

FROM the whole, I may venture to affirm, that there is not one idea which can with any propriety be prefixed to the term FATHER as applied to GOD, in the whole revelation, but what has a plain reference to the *works* of GOD, either in *creation*, *providence*, or *redemption*.

IT may perhaps be of uſe to ſome of my readers, to give the reaſon that ſeems moſt probable to me, why GOD as a FATHER is always ſaid to be *in heaven*, or called the *heavenly* FATHER. This is a ſacred phraſe, I am afraid, tho' very often repeated in the New Teſtament, yet but very little underſtood. It not only teaches us, that as *Jeſus Chriſt* is *now* in heaven, who is the true medium of all our intercourſe with GOD,—our worſhip being only of a right kind, when directed through

* I muſt here obſerve, that by not conſidering the ſcope and import of the Apoſtle's expreſſions in 1 Cor. xv. 28. the text hath been improved as an argument againſt the proper Deity of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. The Apoſtle is there ſpeaking of the ſtate of *Chriſt*'s kingdom, after the reſurrection, when he as mediator, into whoſe hand *God*'s choſen were given to redeem, govern, and bring to glory, ſhall deliver them without ſpot to GOD: And as there ſhall be no more occaſion for his miniſtry in this world, he ſhall deliver up his ſervice, and GOD ſhall be all in all. The text reads literally thus, "Then ſhall the SON be placed in order to him, ſubduing all things, or, placing all things in order, that GOD may be all in all," *i. e.* without ſuch an oeconomical adminiſtration as was neceſſary in this world. But if it is ſtill urged that SON and GOD are different; I may alſo inſiſt that GOD and FATHER are alſo different; for the words read in verſe 24, "GOD *and* the FATHER," according to our ordinary tranſlation of Καὶ, which would infer, that the kingdom muſt be delivered up to one who is GOD, and another who is *Father*, and would make as clearly againſt the Deity of the *Father* as the *Son*. But by conſidering it as above, the text is clear, and free of that ambiguity which it is commonly clouded with.

through *him*, and all the privileges GOD beſtows upon us come in the ſame channel,—and therefore our praiſes and prayers ſhould be directed to our FATHER *in heaven*, ſince *he* is there, in whom they are acceptable.

BUT it hath a ſpecial reference to the difference in point of excellency there is betwixt *Old* and *New* Teſtament *worſhip*. The former, according to the Apoſtle's eſtimate, conſiſted in meats, and drinks, and divers waſhings, and carnal ordinances impoſed upon them, until the time of reformation. He calls them weak, beggarly elements of *this world*, under which the *Jews*, like children, were held in bondage: Figures for the time then preſent,—patterns, and ſhadows only of heavenly things,—confined to an earthly tabernacle, and temple made with hands, where the worſhippers were obliged to attend, and if unavoidably abſent, or at the greateſt diſtance, to perform their worſhip with their faces toward that place.

UNDER the latter, the worſhip is *ſpiritual*, *unlimited*, and *heavenly*; not wrapped up in dark ſigns, figures, and ſhadows; not confined to times, places, a particular nation, and external modes. He who is the ſpirit of all *Jewiſh* worſhip, the ſubſtance of all the ſigns and ſhadows being come, and having fulfilled all the ancient promiſes and prophecies concerning him, has opened a way into the holieſt of all, through his own blood,—taken down the partition,—ſo that believers, who are a holy prieſt-hood in every time, place, and nation, offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices, acceptable to GOD through *Jeſus Chriſt*, who has entered into heaven itſelf, now to appear in the preſence of GOD for us.

THE

THE church *now*, is called the *heavenly Jeruſalem*, in oppoſition to the *earthly Jeruſalem*, the ſeat and center of worſhip among the *Jews*. Hence, ſays the Apoſtle, (*k*) "Ye are not come to the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackneſs and darkneſs, and tempeſt, &c. But ye are come unto *Mount Sion*, and unto the city of the living GOD, the *heavenly Jeruſalem*, &c." To the ſame purpoſe our Saviour tells the *Samaritan* woman, that neither on *Mount Samaria* ſhould the *Samaritans*, nor yet at *Jeruſalem* ſhould the *Jews* worſhip: "But that the hour cometh, and *now* is, when the true worſhippers ſhall worſhip the FATHER in *ſpirit* and *truth*."

THE *ſpirit* and *truth* here, does not mean, as is commonly ſuppoſed, that they ſhould worſhip in their *hearts* and in *ſincerity*, (true worſhippers always do ſo) in oppoſition to worſhipping with the *body*, and in *hypocriſy*; was this the ſenſe, it might then be inferred from our *Saviour*'s words, that none of the Old Teſtament ſaints worſhipped GOD with their *hearts*, and in *ſincerity*; and that chriſtians are not to worſhip GOD with their *bodies*; whereas they are commanded to "ſerve GOD with their *bodies* and *ſpirits*, which are his,—and to preſent their *bodies* living ſacrifices, holy, and acceptable to GOD, which is their reaſonable ſervice."

BUT *Chriſt* here teaches, that chriſtians were to worſhip the *Father in him*, who is the *ſpirit* of all the ſigns and ſhadows, and the *truth* of all the promiſes and prophecies in the Old Teſtament, with reſpect to holy *times*, *places*, and *things*. The Father having declared himſelf well-pleaſed *with him*, all

(*k*) Heb. xii. 18,—22.

all their worſhip muſt be *through him, by whom* they have acceſs with boldneſs to the throne of grace. (*l*) "The LORD is that SPIRIT: And where the SPIRIT the LORD is, there is *liberty*. (*m*) The *teſtimony* of *Jeſus* (the doctrines concerning him in the New Teſtament) is the SPIRIT of *prophecy*," (what was foretold of him in the Old Teſtament.)

AND as *he* who is the *head*, and repreſentative of the *whole* church, (that is, the ſaints both in heaven and earth) is in heaven, and every privilege that pertains to them as ſuch, is heavenly,—their birth,—the image they are formed after,—the bleſſings they enjoy,—their calling,—their inheritance—their converſation,—their hopes,—their affections and deſires,——the country they are travelling to, (for here they are ſtrangers and pilgrims) and ſince all the acts of their worſhip muſt be directed through the heavenly medium,——him who is their aſcended LORD, no wonder if the New Teſtament repreſents their FATHER, who beſtows all theſe bleſſings upon them, and whom they love and adore, as *in heaven*, and ſo frequently calls him their *heavenly* FATHER.

(*l*) 2 Cor. iii. 17. (*m*) Rev. xix. 10. ſee note, pa. 29.

SECT.

SECT. II.

I SHALL now conſider the ſcripture ſenſe of the term SON, as applied to the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. It is ſhewed above in ſeveral particulars, in what ſenſe GOD is called the FATHER of *Jeſus Chriſt*. And as FATHER and SON are *correlates*, that is, one that ſtands in an oppoſite relation to another, any impartial and unprejudiced reader may eaſily conceive in what ſenſe *Jeſus Chriſt* is called the SON *of* GOD.

BUT as I am pretty certain that the greateſt part of my readers, through the prejudice of education, and a bias in favour of other notions concerning this point, will, on that account, not ſo readily ſee the concluſion concerning the *ſonſhip* of *Chriſt*, which natively flows from the ſcripture account of GOD as a FATHER: For that reaſon, I ſhall be obliged to open this ſubject in a more particular manner, that no room may be left for entertaining prepoſſeſſed opinions, ſo contrary to the ſcripture account of that great article of the chriſtian faith.

AND, let me beg my reader to diveſt himſelf as much as he can of any bias in favour of party opinions formerly received, that he may impartially weigh the evidence from revelation, againſt the traditions of men; and I make no doubt which ſide he will be determined to take, as he will plainly ſee, the opinions of men in this matter are attended with too little evidence to reſt an article of faith upon, ſo intereſting, and of ſo great conſequence to himſelf.

ALLOW me then, *firſt*, to give a very brief account of the ſeveral ideas relative to the term SON, as applied to *other things* in ſcripture than *Jeſus Chriſt*, which will in a great meaſure lead to a more diſtinct notion concerning the uſe of the term, as applied to *him*.

BESIDES the ideas of *lineal deſcendants*, whether immediate or more remote, even to the third and fourth generation of a man's ſeed, who are commonly called his *ſons*, there are ſeveral other ideas of ſonſhip in ſcripture.

IN eaſtern ſtile, the inhabitants of a city or country were called the *ſons* or children of that city or country. This is frequent in the Old Teſtament.

THAT which *proceeded* from another thing, whether animate or inanimate, was called the *ſon* of that it proceeded from, and always denotes *derivation*. In this ſenſe, the *ſparks* are called the *ſons of the burning coal*.—(*a*) And *ſons* are called branches or boughs. (*b*) "*Joſeph* is a fruitful bough. (*c*) The *branch* thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf,—the *ſon* of man thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf. (*d*) And there ſhall come out a rod out of the ſtem of *Jeſſe*, and a branch out of his roots."

A SUCCESSOR in government, was called the *ſon* of him or them who went before him.—(*e*) "How ſay ye unto *Pharoah*, I am the *ſon* of the wiſe, the *ſon* of ancient kings."

ADAM

(*a*) Job v. 7. (*b*) Gen. xlix. 22. (*c*) Pſa. lxxx. 15, 17. (*d*) Iſa. xi. 1. (*e*) ibid. xix. 11.

ADAM is called the *ſon of God*, becauſe he was made after his image, and had his being immediately *derived* from him without the inſtrumentality of human generation. For much the ſame reaſon are *Angels* called the *ſons of* GOD, being created by GOD a dignified rank of beings, endowed with excellent ſpiritual powers and perfections, not derived from each other by ſucceſſion, but immediately brought into being by GOD himſelf.

MAGISTRATES are called *ſons* of the moſt high, becauſe of the power and authority they are raiſed to, that in ſome reſpect is the image of GOD's power and government, which makes them a terror to evil doers, and a praiſe to them who do well.

SUCH as were appointed to death are called *ſons*, or children of death.—(*f*) "Preſerve thou thoſe that are appointed to death. (*g*) Hear the groanings of the priſoner, to looſe thoſe that are appointed to death." In both texts, it reads as in the margin, *ſons* or children of death, as doth alſo that which *Saul* ſaid concerning *David*,——(*h*) "Wherefore now ſend and fetch him unto me, for he ſhall ſurely die." He is a *ſon* of death.

WHEN a *ſuperior* would expreſs his love and regard to an *inferior*, he commonly addreſſed him in the language of a *father*, by calling him his *ſon*. In like manner, when an *inferior* would expreſs his dutiful affection and ſubmiſſion to one he acknowledged his *ſuperior*, he did it by calling him *father*.

THE term ſon is alſo uſed to point out the ſubordinate character of ſuch as were under the care of

(*f*) Pſa. lxxix. 11. (*g*) ibid. cii. 20. (*h*) 1 Sam. xx 31.

of others for inſtruction: So *Eli* calls *Samuel* his *ſon*; and others were called *ſons* of the Prophets. For much the ſame reaſon, *Paul* calls *Timothy* and *Philemon*, whom he had converted to the truth, his *ſons*. And to point out the uſeful, ſubmiſſive, and obedient character of *Timothy*, he ſays of him, (*i*) "As a *ſon* with his *father*, he hath ſerved with me in the goſpel."

WHEN one was adopted into another family, he was then called a *Son*. Thus *Moſes* is called the *ſon* of *Pharoah*'s daughter. It alſo ſignifies one that *builds up his father's houſe*,—and *tranſmits his name* down to poſterity. But theſe I ſhall have occaſion to notice afterwards. I ſhall next mention ſeveral ideas of *ſonſhip*, applied to the *wicked* and the *ſaints*, peculiar to their different characters in ſcripture.

THE wicked part of mankind are called *ſons* and *children* of *men*. The *commandments* of *men*, being the matter of their faith, and the rule of their worſhip. The *ſinful cuſtoms of men*, the pattern they imitate. And the *praiſe* of *men*, their higheſt end.

——— OF the *world*.—They are not born from above. They wallow in the wickedneſs of the world,—chuſe it for their portion,—*its* pleaſures are their higheſt felicity,—and their chief ſtudy is to fulfil the luſts and deſires thereof.

——— OF the *Devil*.—They bear his image, being thoroughly qualified with the wickedneſs he introduced into the world,—reſemble him in malice and ſubtilty,—and cheerfully imitate, ſerve, and

(*i*) Phil. ii. 22.

and obey him as a *ſon* his *father*.—Our LORD ſays of them, "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the luſts of your father ye will do."

——— OF *darkneſs* and *diſobedience*.——Their minds are in ignorance of the truth. Their works are the ſhameful works of darkneſs. Their hearts are enmity, and their actions a ſcene of rebellion and treachery againſt GOD.

——— OF *wrath* and the *curſe*.—By nature they are heirs of wrath, and by their wicked deeds they merit the vengeance of GOD. They are a curſe upon earth, and accurſed for ever in the world to come.

——— OF *Belial*. Of *perdition*.—*Without law*, *uſeleſs*, *unprofitable*,—*abandoned to crimes*,—loſt to every ſenſe of real good,—run headlong to deſtruction, and are for ever loſt.

THE ſcripture character of ſaints as *ſons* and children of GOD.—As they are the early objects of his love,—choſen and predeſtinated in *Chriſt Jeſus*, his well-beloved ſon, to the *adoption* of *ſons*, and to be fellow heirs with him of the ſame inheritance.—(*h*) "Having predeſtinated us unto the *adoption of children* by *Jeſus Chriſt* to himſelf. (*i*) And if children, then *heirs*; *heirs* of GOD, and *joint heirs* with *Chriſt*."

——— AS they are converted by the power of the truth,—begotten again,—made ſons of GOD, real members of his ſpiritual family,—have the image of their heavenly father drawn upon them through

(*h*) Eph. i. 5. (*i*) Rom. viii. 17.

through the energy of the ſpirit,—and entitled to innumerable privileges.—(*k*) "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the *ſons of God*. (*l*) Ye have received the ſpirit of adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father*. (*m*) Beloved, now are ye the *ſons of God*, and it doth not yet appear what ye ſhall be; but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is."

——— CHILDREN of *light*.—Begotten of GOD the fountain of light,—poſſeſſed of a true and diſtinct knowledge of GOD their father, by the pure light of his word,—walk in the light of his countenance, the path that ſhines more and more unto the perfect day,—ſhine as children of the light, and the light of their good works ſhines before men, 'till they are made meet for the inheritance of the ſaints in light.

——— OF *wiſdom*.—That is of *Chriſt*, who is the *wiſdom* of GOD made known to men. His ſeed they are, who travailed for them in bloody agonies unto death,—bequeaths to them the fruits of his purchaſe,—and in conſummate *wiſdom* guides them to glory, where he ſhall with delight ſee them as his *ſeed*, the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatiſfied.

——— OF the *promiſe*.—By which they are quickened, gathered, comforted, ſtrengthened, reſtored, and infallibly *ſecured* of the enjoyment of GOD their father for ever.

——— OF the *reſurrection*.—By the truth of *Chriſt*'s *reſurrection* they are begotten again, and confirmed in

(*k*) John i. 12. (*l*) Rom. viii, 15. (*m*) 1 John iii. 2.

in the faith and hope of their own glorious reſurrection, to enter upon the full poſſeſſion of their inheritance as *ſons* of GOD.—(*n*) "Bleſſed be GOD, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt*."

THE ſaints are alſo called *ſons* and children of the *free woman*—of *Zion*,—of *Jeruſalem*,—of the *kingdom*, &c. pointing out the *freedom*, *honour*, *peace*, *ſafety*, *glory*, &c. of the church of *Chriſt*, in which they are born, nouriſhed, inſtructed, and prepared for the kingdom of their father, which was prepared for them before the foundation of the world.

I NOW come to mention ſome general ideas of ſonſhip applied to *Jeſus Chriſt*; one is, that of his being BEGOTTEN.—(*o*) "Thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee. (*p*) The word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father) full of grace and truth."

ANOTHER general idea included in his ſonſhip, is his being called a *child*, and ſaid to be *born*.—(*q*) "Unto us a *child* is *born*. (*r*) That holy thing that ſhall be *born* of thee, ſhall be called the *ſon of* GOD."

HE is called the *firſt born*.—The *firſt born* among the ancient *Jews* had a primogenial right to particular privileges in the family. So *Chriſt* is called the *firſt born*, not only with reſpect to *priority*, or being *before* all others that are called ſons of GOD, this

(*n*) 1 Pet. i. 3. (*o*) Pſa. ii. 7. (*p*) John i. 14. ſee alſo John i. 18. and iii. 16, 18. 1 John iv. 9. (*q*) Iſa. ix. 6. (*r*) Luke i. 35. ſee alſo Acts iv. 27, 30. Matt. ii. 2. John xviii. 37.

this he alſo is, " the *firſt born of every creature:*" But he is called ſo with reſpect to *excellency* and *dignity*. (*s*) " I will make him my *firſt born*, higher than the kings of the earth." A right of *inheritance*, *prieſt-hood*, and *government* over his brethren.—(*t*) " GOD hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken to us by his *ſon*, whom he hath *appointed heir of all things*. (*u*) *Jeſus Chriſt*, the firſt begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. (*v*) And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the *firſt born* from the dead; that in *all things he might have the pre-eminence*."

THE *firſt born* of old, in whoſe ſtead GOD made choice of the *Levites*, had not only a double portion of inheritance, power, and pre-eminence above their brethren, but were particularly loved and honoured of their fathers, had reſpect and ſubmiſſion from their brethren, and miniſtered in holy things for the family. So *Jeſus Chriſt*, the *firſt born of* GOD, had the ſpirit without meaſure given him,—was declared to be the peculiar *favourite* of GOD,—had the *government* of all things committed to him,—Angels and men commanded to *worſhip* him,—and conſtituted the great *high-prieſt* over the houſe of GOD, by no leſs ſolemnity than the *oath of* GOD conſecrated for evermore.

SUBMISSION, *obedience*, and *reſignation* to the *will* of the father, is one idea inſeparable from the character of a dutiful *Son*. In this reſpect, the *Son of* GOD was the moſt perfect pattern.—(*w*) " *Jeſus* ſaith unto them, my meat is to do the *will* of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his work. (*x*) I ſeek

(*s*) Pſa. lxxxix. 27. (*t*) Heb. i. 1. 2. (*u*) Rev. i. 5. (*v*) Col. i. 18. (*w*) John iv. 34. (*x*) ibid. v. 30.

I ſeek not mine own will, but the will of the father who hath ſent me. (*x*) Tho' he was a *Son*, yet learned he *obedience*, by the things which he ſuffered. (*y*) O Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me; nevertheleſs, *not as I will, but as thou wilt*. (*z*) Lo, I come to do *thy will*, O GOD."

IN honouring and glorifying his *Father*, he has given us the moſt finiſhed example.—(*a*) "I honour my Father,—I ſeek not mine own glory. (*b*) I have glorified thee on earth: I have finiſhed the work thou gaveſt me to do."

HE manifeſts and makes known his Father's *name*, *glory*, and *love* to his younger brethren.—(*c*) "I have manifeſted thy *name* unto the men whom thou gaveſt me. I have declared unto them thy *name*, and will declare it: That the love wherewith thou haſt loved me, may be in them, and I in them."

AMONG many other general ideas of ſonſhip, applied to *Chriſt* in ſcripture, I ſhall only mention other two. The word BEN, which in the Old Teſtament language ſignifies a *Son*, comes from a word that ſignifies to *build up*, and the *Greek* word which anſwers to it in the New Teſtament, is rendered *Son* for the ſame purpoſe, becauſe a *Son builds up his Father's houſe*. This idea of ſonſhip is properly applied to the *ſon of* GOD, who *builds up* or edifies the church, which is the houſe of GOD, his heavenly Father. He is the foundation, the edifier,

(*x*) Heb. v. 8. (*y*) Matt. xxvi. 39. (*z*) Heb. x. 7. (*a*) John viii. 49, 50. (*b*) ibid. xvii. 4. (*c*) and xvii. 6, 8, 26.

the ſupporter, and chief corner ſtone † of this building of GOD.

ANOTHER ſimilar idea is included in the word NIN, which alſo ſignifies a *Son that tranſmits his father's name down to poſterity.* This is expreſsly applied to the *Son of* GOD,—(*d*) "*He ſhall be as a ſon to continue his father's name for ever.*" And he himſelf ſays, (*e*) "I will *declare thy name unto my brethren*, in the midſt of the church will I ſing praiſe unto thee.—*(f) I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it.*"

NOW, from ſeveral of theſe ſcripture ideas of ſonſhip, as applied to *Jeſus Chriſt*, eſpecially the two laſt, it is clear that they have not the leaſt relation to *begetting* in any ſenſe the word can be taken in. It muſt then be true, that the ſcripture account of *Chriſt's ſonſhip*, includes more in it than we can learn from his being *begotten.* AND

(*d*) Pſa. lxxii. 17. mar. (*e*) Heb. ii. 12. (*f*) John xvii. 26.

† It is an idea too limited, (and not worthy the ſubject, that becauſe *Chriſt* is called in a general way the *corner ſtone*, in the ſingular number) to ſuppoſe, that he is compared to ſome one ſtone in ſome corner. When the Apoſtle mentions it, Eph. ii. 20, he is comparing the church in general to a vaſt temple, and ſays, it was founded on the doctrines of the Prophets and Apoſtles jointly; conſequently, he means the church in the moſt comprehenſive ſenſe, taking in all good men in all ages, from the beginning to the end of time: And ſo muſt ſpeak of *Chriſt* in his relation to the church, in a ſenſe that is equally large and comprehenſive. Corner ſtones in great edifices, unite and join together the walls on all ſides, below, and above; cement, ſtrengthen, and adorn the whole building, from top to bottom. Thus only can we form any genuine notion of *Chriſt*, being compared to corner ſtones. He is the foundation, corner, and finiſhing part of the ſuperſtructure. That expreſſion of GOD to *Job*, "Whereupon are the foundations of the earth faſtened? Or, who laid the corner ſtone thereof?" muſt denote the finiſhing of its creation: So *Chriſt* being called the corner ſtone of the church, when compared to a building, muſt denote that he is the ſtrength, ſecurity, glory, and perfection of the whole in all times: Which, ſince his appearing in fleſh, he has made more conſpicuous to all men. The reader may conſult 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7. Iſa. xxviii. 16. Pſa. cxviii. 22. Acts iv. 11. Luke xx. 17, Mark xii. 10. Matt. xxi. 42. Job xxxviii. 6.

AND it is alſo evident from a due conſideration of the *whole* of theſe ſcripture ideas of *ſonſhip*, that either *derivation*, *dependence*, *ſubordination*, or *inferiority*, is neceſſarily implied in every notion that can be conceived of it, from any one inſtance ſingly, or the whole taken together. I may therefore venture to affirm, that there is not one idea of *ſonſhip* conſidered *as ſuch* in the Bible, but what points out the *inferior* character of that perſon or thing it is applied to, with reſpect to the oppoſite or *ſuperior* character of that perſon or thing they are ſaid to be *ſons* of. Whatever they may be in other reſpects, the ſenſe in which they are called *ſons*, confines the idea (according to the ſcope of revelation, and the beſt conceptions we can have of it) to the notion of *inferiority*. One may be an equal or ſuperior in other reſpects, but in that part of his character, in which he is a *Son*, he is certainly *inferior*. As for example; a magiſtrate, as ſuch, is equal to thoſe in the ſame ſtation, and ſuperior to ſuch as are under his government; but as he is called a *ſon* of the *moſt high*, in that reſpect he is *inferior*. As a *magiſtrate*, he may be ſuperior to his natural Father, but as a *ſon* he is inferior to him. And with reſpect to *Jeſus Chriſt*, the ſcripture holds him forth to be JEHOVAH, GOD OVER ALL, as was proved above; but all the ideas which revelation affords us of his character *as a ſon*, imply *inferiority*: And therefore by the light of the divine word, we are led to view his *ſonſhip* in another character than *pure Deity*. Which brings me to a more direct and particular anſwer to this queſtion, in what ſenſe JESUS CHRIST, in ſcripture, is called the SON OF GOD.

SECT

SECT III.

THE *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, while in this world, generally ſpoke of himſelf under the title of the *ſon of man*. I do not remember that he is called ſo by any other, except the *Pſalmiſt*, *Daniel*, *Stephen*, and *John*. (*a*) "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the *ſon of man*, whom thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf. (*b*) And behold, one like the *ſon of man*, came with the clouds of heaven,—and there was given him dominion and glory, that all people, nations, and languages, ſhould ſerve him. (*c*) Behold, I ſee the heavens opened, and the *ſon of man* ſtanding on the right hand of GOD. (*d*) And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one ſat, like unto the *ſon of man*, having on his head a golden crown, &c. (*e*) And in the midſt of the ſeven candleſticks, one like unto the *ſon of man*, clothed with a garment down to the foot, &c." The magnificent deſcriptions that are given him, who is called *ſon of man* in theſe texts, leave the reader of them at no loſs to know that it is *Jeſus Chriſt*, as an exalted mediator, who is meant through the whole.

NOTWITHSTANDING the ſacred penmen were ſo ſparing in giving this title *ſon of man* to *Jeſus Chriſt*, he ſeems to delight particularly in it himſelf; for we ſeldom find that he calls himſelf by any other name. As this part of his conduct is worthy of regard, it may teach us, who have his character fully exhibited in revelation, what honour he chuſed to put upon his anceſtors according

(*a*) Pſa. lxxx. 17. (*b*) Dan. vii. 13. (*c*) Acts vii. 56. (*d*) Rev. xiv. 14. (*e*) ibid. i. 13.

ing to the flesh,—and the truth of his being descended from *them* in whom he was promised. It may shew his great love and regard to *man*, when he so frequently calls himself the *son of man*. It points out the great depth of his humility, in being clothed with flesh: And implies the reality of his humanity. But tho' some of these may appear to us good reasons for his assuming that name, especially the two last, which are commonly sustained as the *only* reasons; yet I can see no reason at all for his calling himself so often the *son of man*, to shew that he was *really* man, as this could be of no advantage to those he conversed with; for in his life time here, none doubted that he was *real* man, and but very few thought him any thing more than a *mere man*, and none of the best sort neither.

But I think there remain greater reasons for *Christ* having used this title, the *son of man*, so frequently. By it he leads naturally back to the first promise of himself, in which he, the *most eminent Son of man*, was promised as the *seed of the woman*, for the grand purposes of destroying the works of the *Devil*, and bringing redemption to his chosen. By assuming this name, he shewed himself to be the *true Messiah*, now come to set up that kingdom which should never be destroyed, whom *Daniel* describes under the character of the *son of man*. He, by it, directs the hearers to the consideration of himself as the *second Adam*, now come to restore what the *first Adam* lost to himself, and his seed.

Under this character, the *son of man*, the *Lord Jesus* has the pre-eminence above all that ever did, or shall bear that title; as in him dwells all the fulness of Deity,—with respect to the wonders of his extraordinary conception,—the singular graces

graces he was endowed with above all the ſons of men,—the admirable works he performed, which none other could do,—the offices he ſuſtained, and the commiſſion he bore,—together with the names, privileges, dignity, and glory, conferred upon him: In all which, and many other reſpects, he is the *chief of the ſons of men*,—the choiceſt work of GOD.

SOME of the Prophets, as *Ezekiel* and *Daniel*, have the title *ſon of man* given them, whether to point out the dignity and eminence of theſe Prophets, in any particular reſpect; Or, to put them in mind of their frailty and low original, to keep them humble amidſt ſo many viſions, and ſuch near intercourſe with GOD, I ſhall not determine. But it is remarkable, that tho' *Ezekiel* in his prophecy, is called the *ſon of man* about a hundred times; yet he is never called THE *ſon of man*, which *Jeſus Chriſt* is called, near a hundred times in the goſpels; which certainly points out his ſingular eminence above all others under that title.

THE *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, in revelation, is alſo very often called the SON OF GOD: And in the New Teſtament, this part of his character is repreſented to be ſo important,—ſo much weight laid upon the proper or improper uſe of it, that it nearly concerns every chriſtian, to endeavour with the utmoſt diligence, to attain the right underſtanding of the true ſenſe and meaning thereof. This can only be had by a careful and impartial enquiry into revelation itſelf.

WHATEVER may be the various opinions of others concerning this term, as applied to *Jeſus Chriſt*, I am ſatisfied that he is called the SON OF GOD, as he is the *glorious*, *divine* EMMANUEL,—

the

the *promiſed* MESSIAH, and ALL SUFFICIENT SAVIOUR, *choſen*, *anointed*, and *ſent of* GOD, for the SALVATION *of men*. Here I include theſe three things: The *excellency* of the PERSON, EMMANUEL, who is GOD and MAN: His *deſignation* to the *office of* SAVIOUR: And his *fitneſs* and *ſufficiency* to *finiſh* the *great work of Salvation*.

BEFORE I enter upon the proof of the above propoſition, I ſhall mention ſome texts where the title *ſon of God* is given him, to point out the *excellency of his Perſon*, and ſome others his *office*, which will tend to clear the terms I have uſed.

'TIS certain that *Jeſus Chriſt* is called the *ſon of God*, in a ſenſe far *ſuperior* to all others who are called his *ſons*; becauſe he has a nearer relation and reſemblance to GOD; hence he is called *his own Son*, *only begotten Son*,—*beloved Son*,—*firſt born*,—*the image of the inviſible God*,—and the *brightneſs of his glory*. Tho' all theſe expreſſions imply *derivation* and *dependence*, ideas inſeparable from the common ſenſe of the terms; yet, they alſo denote the excellency of the *Perſon*, and his reſemblance to GOD, with the peculiar relation and endearment he is under above all others.

THE title *Son of God*, ſeems likewiſe to have a reſpect to the excellency of his *Perſon*, when joined to the word *Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*, (which are the ſame in ſenſe) as deſcriptive of the *Perſon* who bore that official name.—"*Peter* anſwered and ſaid, thou art *Chriſt*, the *Son* of the *living God*." And the high-prieſt, when adjuring *Chriſt* to a confeſſion, ſaid, "Tell us whether thou be *Chriſt*, the *Son of God*." To the ſame purpoſe is that which *Martha* ſays, "I believe that thou art *Chriſt*, the *Son of God*."

THERE

THERE are alſo many texts, where the title, *Son of God*, has a reſpect to his *office*, as the promiſed *Meſſiah*, the *Saviour*; not excluding the excellence of his perſon, which rendered him fit for the office he was appointed to. This is plain from what he replied to the *Jews*, who charged him with blaſphemy for aſſuming the title *Son of God*.—"Do ye ſay of him whom the Father hath *ſanctified*, and ſent into the world, thou blaſphemeſt; becauſe, I ſaid, I am the *Son of God*?" His being *ſanctified* and *ſent* by the Father, He makes a ſufficient ground to entitle him to the name *Son of God*. It is ſaid of *John the Baptiſt*, that he, "ſaw and bare record that this is the *Son of God*." Which muſt be meant of the *promiſed Meſſiah*. "*Nathaniel* ſaid, *Rabbi*, thou art the *Son of God*, thou art the *king of Iſrael*." As the *Meſſiah* was promiſed as a *king*, the *Jews* looked for him in that character; and here *Nathaniel* owns *Jeſus* to be the very *Perſon*, *Meſſiah the king*. When *Jeſus* aſked the man whoſe eyes he had opened, "doſt thou believe on the *Son of God*?" It muſt mean *Meſſiah*, the *Saviour*, for in that character only he was the object of the man's faith; which is evident from the reply he made to the man who aſked him who the *Son of God was*? *Jeſus* ſaid, "thou haſt both ſeen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." When the Apoſtle ſays, "We know that the *ſon of God* is come," it muſt mean the *promiſed Meſſiah*, who was appointed of GOD the Saviour of men.

IT might be alſo obſerved, that there are ſeveral texts where *ſon of God* is joined with *Jeſus* or *Chriſt*, in which the name *ſon of God* is put for the *Meſſiah* or *Saviour*, and the terms *Jeſus* or *Chriſt* do not ſignify character or office, but the particular name by which he was known among the *Jews* as a *man*, and

and diſtinguiſhed from other men. Hence the *Ethiopian Eunuch* ſays, "I believe that *Jeſus Chriſt*, is the *ſon of God*;" And *Luke* tells us, that *Paul* "preached *Chriſt* in the ſynagogues, that he is the *ſon of God*." That is, that the man commmonly called *Jeſus*, is the *promiſed Meſſiah*, the *Saviour*. This ſenſe of ſuch texts is the more evident, if it is conſidered, that the great queſtion betwixt the *Jews* and *chriſtians*, was not concerning the proper *Deity* of our Saviour, or whether *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was the true and eternal GOD; but whether he was the *promiſed Meſſiah*, the Saviour of the world. But I only hint theſe things here, as I ſhall have occaſion to conſider ſome of them more fully afterwards. This much was neceſſary to free the terms from ambiguity, and diſtinguiſh the ideas included in that ſenſe, which I think the title, *ſon of God*, is applied to *Jeſus Chriſt* in ſcripture.

I SHALL next endeavour to prove, by a number of particular arguments, that it is the *true* ſenſe and meaning, which our Saviour and the ſacred writers deſigned to convey to chriſtian diſciples in all ages: And the only ſenſe in which it is poſſible for them to underſtand that phraſe, as applied to *Chriſt*, agreeable to the ſcope of revelation, or their own ſpiritual edification.

1. THE *firſt* argument in favour of this ſenſe of *Chriſt*'s ſonſhip, may be taken from the various ideas of ſonſhip mentioned above. The common notion of *Chriſt* being a *Son*, as he is GOD, does not agree with any ſenſe ſonſhip is taken in among men, nor can any idea that revelation affords, be juſtly connected therewith: Except that one of human ſonſhip be inſiſted on, that a *ſon* is of the ſame *nature* with his *father*, which in this caſe,

would make *two Gods*, as we ſhall ſee afterwards. But when we conſider *Chriſt* in his character as *Emmanuel*, the *promiſed Meſſiah*, the *ſent of God*, and *Saviour of men*, *engaged* in the great work of their *ſalvation*, there is not one idea of ſonſhip, that I can remember either in ſcripture or the common acceptation of mankind, but what is perfectly reconcileable to him as the *ſon of God:* But as it would be too prolix to conſider every idea of ſonſhip in this light, I ſhall only take two or three, which will ſerve as a key for all the reſt.

DERIVATION is one idea of *ſonſhip*, which is neceſſarily implied in his being *begotten of God*, and his *firſt born:* And with reſpect to the offices he bears, the ſcriptures plainly ſhew that they are *derived* from GOD, as he was *choſen*, *appointed*, *ſent*, and *authorized* by GOD.

LIKENESS, is another idea of *ſonſhip*, in which reſpect he is the *image of God*,—the only *medium* of all the knowledge we can have of GOD; but this idea is intirely confined to his complex character, as we ſhall ſee afterwards.

SUBORDINATION, DEPENDENCE, and SUBMISSION, are manifeſt in his character *as a ſon*. Hence he ſays, "The *Father* is *greater* than I,—I *live by the Father*,—The *Son can do nothing of himſelf*,—I muſt be about my *Father*'s *buſineſs*,—The *Father* who *ſent me*, he doth the works." All theſe prove his character to be inferior *as a Son*.

THE Son is a *diſtinct individual being* from the Father. This idea is juſt, when applied to *Chriſt* in his oeconomical character as a *Son*, which is clear

clear from his praying *to the Father*,—and ſaying, "I ſeek not mine *own will*, but the *will* of the *Father* that ſent me. Not *my will*, but *thine* be done." The will of GOD is but *one*, yet here are *two wills*, diſtinct from each other, mentioned. If the will of the Father, be the will of GOD; and the will of the Son, diſtinct from the Father's, the Son muſt be a diſtinct being from the Father, or he could not have a diſtinct will and conſciouſneſs from the Father, as the above expreſſions of his plainly prove he has. Now, we muſt either conclude that he is a *Son*, in an oeconomical ſenſe, in which it is neceſſary for him to have a diſtinct will: Or, we muſt maintain that there are *two Gods*, each poſſeſſed of diſtinct powers of willing and conſciouſneſs.

ANOTHER ſcriptural idea of *ſonſhip*, is one that *builds up his Father's houſe*. We can be in no doubt in what ſenſe this is applicable to the *ſon of God*, as it muſt be limited to his official character as the Saviour of men. GOD tells *David*, by *Nathan*, "I will ſet up thy ſeed after thee,—and I will eſtabliſh his kingdom. *He ſhall build an houſe for my name*, and I will eſtabliſh the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his *Father*, and he ſhall be my *Son*." The whole of this undoubtedly refers to the promiſed ſeed of *David*; and whatever reſpect it had to *Solomon*, the particulars mentioned, are ſtrictly true of none but the *ſon of God*, who is alſo called the *ſon* and *ſeed* of *David*, whoſe kingdom and reign is for ever. Of this we are abſolutely certain, ſince the Apoſtle hath applied the words expreſsly to the *ſon of God*, when proving *his* character to be more excellent than the Angels, becauſe GOD had ſaid of him, "I will be *his Father*, and *he* ſhall be *my Son*." That is him, of whom it was ſaid, "*He ſhall build a houſe for my name*,

name, &c." A ſhort, but clear deſcription of the diſtinct parts the *Father* and *Son* ſuſtain in the oeconomy of redemption.

THE *Son of God* rears *ſuch* a ſuperſtructure, in *ſuch a way*, and with *ſuch materials*, as ſhall eternally exalt the glory of his Father's *love*, *wiſdom*, *mercy*, and *grace*. He laid the foundation in his own blood, which he gave as a price to redeem them who were children of wrath,—dead in treſpaſſes and ſins,—enemies to GOD in their minds by wicked works,—walking after the luſts of the fleſh, and fulfilling the deſires thereof: By the powerful efficacy of his word, he gathers them out of all nations,—quickens and ſanctifies them by his ſpirit, and ſo makes them poliſhed living ſtones in the ſpiritual building of GOD, which is wholly intruſted to his care, as the great architect of this fabric of mercy, which is begun, carried on, and finiſhed to the eternal praiſe of GOD, by him "who is faithful in all things over this his own houſe, AS A SON."

I SHALL only mention one idea more of *ſonſhip*, which is that of one *tranſmitting his Father's name down to poſterity*. To what was ſaid above on this, I ſhall juſt add, that as the name of GOD, is *in* his ſon *Jeſus Chriſt*, ſo it is made known by him.* We can have no ſaving knowledge of GOD, but as revealed in *him*, who is not only the *medium* of our *knowledge*, but the *means* of our *acceſs* to GOD. He

IS

* Pſa. xci. 14. which we have tranſlated,—"Becauſe he hath known my name,"—reads literally,—"I will ſet him on high, becauſe *he hath made my name known*." A promiſe reſpecting the exaltation of *Chriſt*, after glorifying his Father in his humiliation upon earth. The life of *Chriſt*, was a viſible repreſentation of the name of GOD, and the cleareſt diſplay of the divine perfections. That power by which he did ſo many ſtupendous works, was the almighty power of GOD: He gave the cleareſt diſplay of divine

is with the greateſt propriety called, "the *image* of the inviſible GOD. No man knoweth the Father, but he to whom the *ſon doth reveal him.*" When *Philip* wanted to ſee the *Father*, *Jeſus* ſaid to him, "Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet ſayeſt thou, ſhew us the *Father?* He that hath *ſeen me*, hath *ſeen the Father*. No man cometh to the Father, but through him." All this is certainly ſaid of him as the mediator betwixt GOD and men.

FROM the conſideration of theſe, and other ideas of *ſonſhip*, being ſo clearly applied to *Jeſus Chriſt* as *Emmanuel*, the *all-ſufficient Saviour of men*, it amounts to *one* good argument, that in *that* ſenſe he is called the *Son of God*.

2. IT may be obſerved as another argument, that as he is called the *ſon of man*, to point him out to us as the *Meſſiah*, ſignifying his *relation to men* in an eminent ſenſe, as the promiſed ſeed of the woman, and chief of all the ſons of men: So he is called the *Son of God*, as he is the *Meſſiah*, including that *ſublime relation to* GOD, by which he is in a more eminent ſenſe, the *Son of God*, than any other who are called ſo.

THE firſt promiſe that was made of the *Meſſiah*, was,

divine benevolence or good will to men, in living and dying for them: He went about always doing good, diffuſing his god-like kindneſs in the greateſt acts of compaſſion, ſympathy, and tenderneſs: He gave a moſt ſtriking exhibition of the mercy of GOD, in forgiving his moſt inveterate enemies, and ſhedding his own blood for their ſalvation: He ſhewed the purity and holineſs of GOD in real life: In ſhort, all the revealed perfections of GOD were conſpicuouſly manifeſted in his life, death, and ſatisfaction; in him, "mercy and truth met together, righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other."

was, as the *ſeed of the woman*, who ſhould bruiſe the ſerpents head, that is, deſtroy his *power*. Now his being called the ſeed of the woman, muſt have a near relation to the title *ſon of man*: But this promiſe concerning him, is ſaid to be fulfilled by him, as the *Son of God*; for *John* ſays, "The *Son of God* was manifeſted to *deſtroy the works of the Devil.*" He, as the *ſon of man*, was promiſed to do this great work, and as the *ſon of God* he actually finiſhed it; which evidently ſhews they have both a reſpect to him as the *Meſſiah*, the Saviour of men.

PERHAPS ſome will think this argument not concluſive, becauſe he is not called *ſon of man* in the firſt promiſe, and therefore it has not a relation to his being the *Meſſiah*. But there is abundance of texts to ſupport the idea; as for example, (*f*) "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, the *ſon of man*, whom thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf." Whether the firſt clauſe refers to the atonement he was to make, or the ſupport that ſhould be given him in the work,—and the ſettling of his kingdom and glory after it, I need not here enquire, as it cannot be doubted that the *Meſſiah* is meant, that *ſon of man*, on whom GOD has devolved the care of man's ſalvation, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one *choſen out of the people*."

DANIEL ſays, (*g*) "I ſaw,—and behold, one like the *ſon of man*, come with the clouds of heaven,—and there was given to him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, &c." This ſo plainly refers to the *Meſſiah*, as it needs no comment.

THE

(*f*) Pſa. lxxx. 17. (*g*) Dan. vii. 13.

(*h*) "THE people answered him, we have heard out of the *law*, that *Christ* (*Messiah*) abideth for ever: And how sayest thou, the *son of man* must be lifted up? *Who is this son of man?*" The *Jews* had no notion of any other *son of man*, in that dignified sense the Prophets had spoken of him, than the *Christ* or *Messiah*, whom they had heard of out of the *law* or Old Testament: And they seem surprized, that any thing should be said of him *as* the *son of man*, that was not consistent with what they had learned of the *Messiah*, whom they expected.

(*i*) "IT is written of the *son of man*, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought." This includes all that is said in the Old Testament concerning the sufferings of the *Messiah*, who is here called the *son of man*: And in many other instances *Christ* applies to himself, under the title *son of man*, what was said of him as the promised *Messiah*. But these are sufficient to prove, that the title *son of man*, in that eminent sense it was applied to our Saviour, points him out as the *Messiah*, implying his relation to man: So his being called *son of God*, points him out in the same character, including his peculiar relation to GOD, above all that are called his sons.

3. THIS sense of *Christ*'s sonship, may be proved from the few hints that are given in the Old Testament concerning the *Messiah*, under the title of a SON. These are either under some shadow or type; or they are spoken prophetically concerning some part of his oeconomical character,—his incarnation,—resurrection from the dead,—or his kingdom, exaltation, and government: And we have the most certain rule of interpreting these passages, as

(*h*) John xii. 34. (*i*) Mark. ix. 12.

as they are all applied to him in the New Teſtament. That which the Apoſtle cites from *Samuel*, as a proof of *Chriſt*'s character being more honourable than Angels, becauſe he was called a SON, I have conſidered above, where it appears in what ſenſe it is applied to him. To much the ſame purpoſe is that promiſe concerning him in the *Pſalms*.—(*k*) "He ſhall cry unto me, thou art *my Father*, my GOD, and the rock of my ſalvation: Alſo, I will make him my *firſt born*, higher than the kings of the earth." Where his *filial dependence* upon GOD, as his *Father*, is pointed out in the ſtrongeſt light, and the confidence he ſhould have as a SON, in going through the arduous work of man's ſalvation: Alſo, the great dignity conferred upon him after it was finiſhed.

ISAIAH tells the houſe of *David* of a very remarkable ſign, which JEHOVAH would give them. —(*l*) "Behold, a virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a SON, and ſhall call his name EMMANUEL." This is expreſsly applied to *Jeſus Chriſt*, with reſpect to his appearing in fleſh as the Saviour of mankind, by the concurrent teſtimonies of *Matthew* and the Angel *Gabriel*, who ſaid to *Joſeph* concerning *Mary*, "She ſhall bring forth a SON, and thou ſhalt call his name *Jeſus*: For he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins." Now (ſays *Matthew*) all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken of the *Lord*, by the Prophet, ſaying, behold, a virgin ſhall be with child, and ſhall bring forth a SON, and they ſhall call his name EMMANUEL, which being interpreted, is GOD WITH US." It is too evident to need explication, that in this inſtance, the

(*k*) Pſa. lxxxix. 26, 27. (*l*) Iſa. vii. 14.

the ſonſhip of *Chriſt* is reſtricted to his complex character EMMANUEL, the SAVIOUR *of men.*

IN the other inſtance where *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of him, as the *child born*, and the *Son given*, he ſays,—(*m*) "The government ſhall be upon his ſhoulders,—of the increaſe of his government and peace there ſhall be no end, upon the throne of *David*, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with judgment and with juſtice, from henceforth even for ever." We cannot refuſe the juſtneſs of that application, in a very ſimilar deſcription, which the Angel gave *Mary* of the SON ſhe ſhould bring forth.—(*n*) "The Angel ſaid, fear not, *Mary*, behold, thou ſhalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a SON, and ſhall call his name JESUS. He ſhall be great, and ſhall be called the SON of the HIGHEST; and the LORD GOD ſhall give unto him the throne of his Father *David*: And he ſhall reign over the houſe of *Jacob* for ever; and of his kingdom there ſhall be no end." The name he was to bear, implies the ſalvation he was to procure. It was given as a reaſon why he was called JESUS, becauſe, ſaid the Angel, "he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins." By the appointment of heaven, this was his *proper name*. But the term *Son* here, as in all other places where it is uſed, is deſcriptive of a character, in which is contained a number of diſtinct facts, and it is ſometimes applied to one part of the character, and ſometimes to another. In this paſſage, it is appropriated to the exalted ſtate of kingly government, which GOD would raiſe him unto, after finiſhing the great work of redemption. It ſo plainly reſpects him in his oeco-

(*m*) Iſa. ix. 6, 7. (*n*) Luke i. 31, 32, 33.

nomical character, that to apply it to any other ſenſe, would be a manifeſt abuſe of the paſſage.

As to that paſſage in the *Proverbs*,—(*o*) "What is his name, or what is his ſon's name?" (which hath been ſo often perverted, by making it a proof of *Chriſt*'s ſonſhip, as he is God) I think it is evident from the ſcope of it, that it has no relation to *Chriſt* at all; but a queſtion of the ſame kind with ſome others in ſcripture, "who (that is, what man) hath aſcended up to heaven, &c. what is his name, and what is his ſon's name?"

Nor do I think *Nebuchadnezzar* meant any thing concerning *Jeſus Chriſt*, the *Meſſiah*, when in the height of his ſurprize, he ſays,—(*p*) "Lo, I ſee four men looſe, walking in the midſt of the fire,—and the form of the fourth is like the *ſon of God*." Any one but tolerably acquainted with the Bible only, will ſee that it was the manner of ſpeaking in the eaſtern countries, to call almoſt every thing *Father*, *Son*, or *Daughter*. Hence, for a proud or wicked man, we read the *ſon of pride*, the *ſon of wickedneſs*; and for mighty men, the *ſons of the mighty*. It is alſo obſervable, that the term God, is often uſed to heighten the idea of the thing ſpoken of, as, "*the trees of God*, &c." Why then might not *Nebuchadnezzar*, at the ſight of ſo glorious a perſon, call him the *ſon of God*, or one whoſe glory was above the appearance of men,—one of a more divine and God-like form than the other three, whom he afterwards calls the *Angel* or *meſſenger* of the God of *Shadrach*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego*. This was like the language of a heathen king, who ſuppoſed that men might be *deified*, for he calls him

(*o*) Pro. xxx. 4. (*p*) Dan. iii. 25.

him a *man* as well as the *other*, but more like the notion *he* had of a GOD. It cannot be imagined with any probability, that this idolatrous prince knew any thing of *Chriſt*, tho' ſome would have him know more than many of his Aſtoples did, all the time *Chriſt* was among them.

THERE is one text more in the Old Teſtament, which claims our particular attention, becauſe currently interpreted of the *ſon as he is God*, which is directly contrary to the ſcope of the paſſage itſelf, and the uſe which the Apoſtles make of it in the New Teſtament.—(*q*) "I will declare the decree, the LORD hath ſaid unto me, thou art my SON, this day have I begotten thee." It is evident, that the general ſcope of this *Pſalm*, is a prophetical deſcription of the character of the *Meſſiah*, in ſome things particularly relating to his *ſufferings*, *reſurrection*, *kingdom*, and *conqueſt* over his enemies.

THE *raging of the heathen, and vain imaginations of the people*, are expreſsly applied by (*r*) *Peter* and *John* to *Herod*, *Pontius Pilate*, the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that were gathered againſt CHRIST. Theſe Apoſtles interpreted this Pſalm, with reſpect to the counſel and determination of GOD, concerning what ſhould happen to CHRIST. When the Apoſtle would convince the *Jews*, that the ſame JESUS, whom they had condemned and crucified, was the *Meſſiah* promiſed to the fathers, he ſays,—(*s*) "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promiſe that was made unto the fathers, GOD hath fulfilled the ſame unto us their children, in that he hath *raiſed up* JESUS again: as it is alſo written in the ſecond Pſalm, "*Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*"

(*q*) Pſa. ii. 7. (*r*) Acts iv. 25.—29. (*s*) ibid. xiii. 32, 33.

thee." Now, to deny that by the SON in this text, is meant the *Meſſiah*, is in plain terms to ſay, that the Apoſtle, or the Spirit by which he was inſpired, did not underſtand the meaning of it; ſeeing it is ſo expreſsly applied to him in that character, yea, brought as a proof of his being the MESSIAH: And not only here, but in other places, it is accommodated to the ſame purpoſe. It is certainly ſufficient to limit human curioſity, when the matter is determined ſo explicitly by a divine interpreter.

THE text itſelf is the language of the SON, who ſays,—" I will declare the decree, the LORD hath ſaid unto me, &c." Now the Apoſtle tells us, he became our high prieſt in purſuance of this decree, (*t*) " No man taketh this honour to himſelf, but he that is called of GOD, as was *Aaron:* So alſo, *Chriſt* glorified not himſelf, to be made an high-prieſt; but he that ſaid unto him, thou art my SON, this day have I begotten thee." What kind of reaſoning would this be for an Apoſtle, if the *ſonſhip* in the text referred to the *manner* of his divine exiſtence, under which conſideration, he could not be *ſet apart, appointed, conſecrated, or perfected*; nor could any office be preſcribed to him. But the Apoſtle affirms all theſe of the SON, mentioned in the text, and therefore he muſt be ſo deſigned with reference to his oeconomical character.

CHRIST muſt certainly be conſidered under the ſame character in the 7th, as in the 8th verſe of this Pſalm, where it is ſaid, " Aſk of me, and I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion."

(*t*) Heb. v. 4, 5.

ſeſſion." To *aſk* and *receive* an inheritance and poſſeſſion, are terms quite agreeable with his inferior character, as *Meſſiah*: But abſolutely inconſiſtent with *Deity*. As GOD, he has an original right to all creatures, the heavens and earth are his, and all they contain.

THE word DAY in the text, is ſuppoſed to mean *eternity*; and ſo the SON is concluded to be an *eternal* SON. The beſt reaſon I could ever hear for this conjecture was, that ſome men have thought ſo. But the Apoſtle ſurely thought otherwiſe, when he applies the text to things done in *time*: And alſo joins it with another ſimilar paſſage, which is ſpoken in the future time, and very much elucidates this, "I *will* be to him a *Father*, and he *ſhall* be to me a *Son*." This cannot mean either *eternity*, or the pure *Deity* of *Chriſt*. Beſides, there is not one inſtance where the phraſe *to-day* ſignifies eternity in all the word of GOD.

MANY commentators apply the text to the *reſurrection* of *Chriſt*, from what the Apoſtle ſays, Acts xiii. 32, 33. "The promiſe which was made unto the fathers, GOD hath fulfilled the ſame unto us their children, in that he hath raiſed up *Jeſus again*; as it is alſo written in the ſecond Pſalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Tho' the application of it to *Chriſt*'s reſurrection equally favours my argument; yet, I think by cloſe attention to this paſſage, it will be found, it rather refers to the ſending of *Chriſt* in the fleſh, as the fulfilling of thoſe promiſes made to the fathers.

THE Apoſtle had been giving the *Jews* at *Antioch*, a demonſtrative account of *Jeſus* being the true

true *Meſſiah* promiſed to the fathers, in which he introduces the teſtimony of *John the Baptiſt*,—charges his death upon their countrymen, proves his reſurrection from the teſtimony of living witneſſes, and then tells them that theſe things were foretold by promiſes to the fathers, which were now fulfilled to them, *viz.* The promiſe of the coming of *Chriſt*, ver. 33. GOD hath fulfilled the *ſame* (that very promiſe made to the fathers, mentioned in the foregoing verſe) unto us their children, in that he hath *raiſed up Jeſus*, (*again*, this word the original will not bear) as it is written in the ſecond Pſalm, "thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." The promiſe of his *reſurrection*, he adds the very next verſe.—"And as concerning that he *raiſed him up from the dead*, no more to return to corruption, he ſaid on this wiſe, I will give you the ſure mercies of *David*, &c." The firſt *raiſing up* here, muſt refer to his coming in the fleſh, as expreſſed in the 23d verſe, "Of this man's (*David*) ſeed, hath GOD, according to his promiſe, *raiſed* unto *Iſrael*, a *Saviour Jeſus*." The words "*unto us their children*," ſeem to limit it to that ſenſe. Whereas had it been meant of the reſurrection, why is it added immediately, "And as concerning that he *raiſed him up from the dead*," if in the former verſe, he had meant the reſurrection? He rather ſeems to add theſe words, on purpoſe to diſtinguiſh this laſt *raiſing up* from the former. Moreover the words "*as concerning*," point out another ſubject than the foregoing, whereas the former part of the 34th verſe is ſuperfluous, if the 33d meant the *reſurrection* of *Chriſt*. Beſides, the word here tranſlated *raiſed up*, in other texts, ſignifies to *raiſe up ſeed*. "I will *raiſe* unto *David* a righteous branch.—I will *raiſe up* thy *ſeed* after thee,

thee, which ſhall be of thy ſons, and will eſtabliſh his kingdom.—I will *raiſe him up* a faithful prieſt.—And *raiſe up ſeed* to thy brother.—That of the fruit of his loins, according to the fleſh, he would *raiſe up Chriſt* to ſit on his throne.—A Prophet ſhall the LORD your GOD *raiſe up* unto you of your brethren, like unto me."

As to the other two places where this text from the ſecond Pſalm is cited, they have no relation to the *reſurrection of Chriſt*, diſtinct from other parts of his character. It is therefore plain, from the uſe the Apoſtle makes of this text, that it refers to the general character of the *Meſſiah, as the ſon of God*, which name, as foretold in the Old Teſtament, was particularly given him, when he appeared in fleſh upon the important errand of man's ſalvation.

THUS, I think it is abundantly evident, that all the texts in the Old Teſtament, which ſpeak of *Chriſt* as a SON, are in the New Teſtament, applied to him in his oeconomical character; which makes one ſtrong argument for his ſonſhip being taken in that ſenſe. But I proceed to a

4th General argument, taken from ſeveral texts, which ſeem *exegetical* or explanatory of the term *ſon of God*, as applied to *Chriſt* in the New Teſtament, and which cannot be interpreted any other way than as having a relation to his oeconomical character.—The firſt I ſhall mention, is that declaration of GOD concerning his SON at his baptiſm, which was repeated at his tranſfiguration. "*This is my beloved* SON, *in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him.*" Three very comprehenſive ſentences, and all agreeable to the preſent purpoſe. In general, GOD, in the

the character of the *Father*, expreſſes his delight and ſatisfaction in *Jeſus Chriſt* his *Son*, as he ſtood intruſted with the great concerns of men's ſalvation, and the obligation to obedience from them, on account of that oeconomical relation. The *relation* and *love* of GOD to *Chriſt*, is expreſſed in the firſt clauſe. "*This is my beloved* SON." In the ſecond, are implied the relation the redeemed ſtand in to GOD, and the love he bears to them *in his ſon*, as mediator. "In whom I am well pleaſed." Which is ſimilar to that expreſſion, "I am pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake;" which righteouſneſs the *Son* having finiſhed, and the *Father* accepted on their behalf, a new relation is conſtituted betwixt GOD and them, as the foundation of their duty required in the laſt clauſe, "hear ye him."

WE are under neceſſity to include the notion of *Chriſt* as *Mediator* and *Redeemer*, in the character of *Son* in this text, or it is impoſſible to make good ſenſe of it. How elſe can we account for GOD's being well pleaſed with ſinners *in him?* Is it not for what he has done for them as *Mediator* and their *Redeemer?* Or where ſhall we find ground for any particular immediate obedience to the *Son* more than to the *Father?* If he be conſidered to be GOD, as he is a SON, he cannot be the medium of our acceptance with GOD,—nor the object of any particular duty diſtinct from the Father, except we admit the notion of *two* GODS.

PETER tells us that the "*Lord Jeſus Chriſt* received from GOD honour and glory, when this voice came to him from heaven." How this can be true, if he is a SON, as he is GOD, is not eaſily accounted for: That is, how he could receive honour and glory *as* GOD, by GOD owning him to be

be *his* SON! But it is eaſy to conceive how he might receive honour and glory in his inferior character as GOD's *ſervant*,—the promiſed *Meſſiah*, by being ſo ſolemnly owned to be the "*beloved ſon of God, in whom he was well pleaſed.*"

AND as it is with *Chriſt*, *as Mediator*, that GOD is well pleaſed, it muſt be in that ſenſe, he is here called *his beloved* SON. This is further clear from a parallel text,—(*u*) "Behold *my ſervant*, whom I uphold, mine *elect*, in whom my ſoul delighteth: I have put my ſpirit upon him, he ſhall bring forth judgment to the *Gentiles*, &c." All this, with ſeveral other things that are in the context, certainly belong to him *as Mediator*. The term *ſervant*, as applied to him, is the ſame with *Meſſiah*, and that of *Elect*. *Matthew* renders (*v*) "*Beloved in whom I am well pleaſed*," when he applies the paſſage at large to *Chriſt*, which is the ſame with the text we are conſidering, and ſhews them to be of the ſame import.

AND whereas we are commanded to *hear the* SON, it is plain in what ſenſe we are to underſtand that title, from an ancient prophecy of *Chriſt* by *Moſes*.—(*w*) "The LORD thy GOD will raiſe up unto thee a Prophet from the midſt of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, *him ſhall ye hear*." The (*x*) Apoſtle tells us, that this was foretold of *Jeſus Chriſt*. From theſe conſiderations it is indiſputable, that his being called the *beloved Son* in the text, is meant of his complex character as *Mediator*, *the Saviour of men*. In him as the *beloved ſon of God*, are we accepted, having made peace through the

 blood

(*u*) Iſa. xlii. 1. (*v*) Matt. xii. 18. (*w*) Deut. xviii. 15. (*x*) Acts iii. 22.

blood of his croſs. He is the great Prophet and teacher of his people, whom they are to "hear in all things whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto them." For "GOD, (ſays the Apoſtle) in theſe laſt times hath ſpoken to us by his SON."

WE have heard the teſtimony of the Father concerning *Chriſt's ſonſhip*; the next inſtance ſhall be a ſhort commentary upon this term from his *own mouth*. Having cured a man that was born blind, whom the *Jewiſh rulers*, through their blindneſs, had excommunicated for receiving his cure on the ſabbath, and ſaying, that his phyſician was a Prophet, and had cured him by the power of GOD. Our LORD, to ſhew the regard he has to thoſe who are perſecuted for telling the truth, found out the man, and opens more fully his character unto him. "He ſaid unto him, doſt thou believe in the *ſon of God?* He anſwered and ſaid, *who is he*, LORD, that I might believe on him? And *Jeſus* ſaid unto him, thou haſt both *ſeen him*, and it is *he that talketh with thee*."

OUR Saviour very rarely, if in any inſtance but this, expreſsly called himſelf the *ſon of God*. But here he does it in ſuch a manner, as the meaneſt capacity may underſtand that his *human nature* muſt be included in his own deſcription of himſelf as the *ſon of God*. Whoever is ſo poſſeſſed with prejudice as to deny this, do in effect ſay, that our LORD either gave ſuch a deſcription of his *ſonſhip* to the man, as he could have no ideas of,—could underſtand nothing about, and ſo impoſed upon him: Or, that the lips of truth told the man a plain and undiſguiſed falſhood, by ſaying, in anſwer to the man's queſtion, "Thou haſt both *ſeen him*, (*the ſon of God*) and *it is he that talketh with thee*."

IT

IT is very remarkable to our purpoſe, how the *Ethiopian Eunuch* came to the knowledge and belief of the *ſon of God*. Having read that prophetical account of *Chriſt*'s ſufferings,—(*y*) "He was led as a ſheep to the ſlaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his ſhearers, ſo opened he not his mouth, &c." He aſked *Philip* who the Prophet was there ſpeaking about? We are told that *Philip* from that text, preached JESUS unto him, and from the evidence of the truth, that JESUS was the perſon ſpoken of, he deſired to be baptized. *Philip* told him he might, if he believed with all his heart. "He anſwered, I believe that JESUS CHRIST is the SON OF GOD." The *Eunuch* had been at *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, where he, no doubt, had been told the current news of the nation at that time, concerning *Jeſus* and his followers; but it is plain, he did not underſtand his character as the *Saviour*, till *Philip* informed him of the accompliſhment of theſe prophecies which he had been reading, in the ſufferings, death, and reſurrection of *Jeſus*, as the *Meſſiah* and *Saviour* of men. This knowledge was the ground of the faith which he expreſſed, "That *Jeſus* (the man of whom he had heard among the *Jews*, and whoſe real character *Philip* had now informed him of) was the *ſon of God*;" the promiſed *Meſſiah*, whoſe ſufferings he had been reading, but did not know who to apply them to. This muſt be the ſenſe of the paſſage, or we can find no connection betwixt *Philip*'s preaching *Jeſus* unto him, and his believing on the *ſon of God*: Nor could his confeſſion of ſuch faith in any other ſenſe give him a right to baptiſm, the badge of the chriſtian religion.

CHRIST

(*y*) Iſa. liii. 7, 8.

CHRIST having finiſhed the work of redemption on the croſs,—riſen from the dead, and about to aſcend to heaven as the repreſentative of his redeemed ſeed, he ſays to *Mary*,—(z) "Go to *my brethren*, and ſay unto them, I aſcend unto *my Father*, and *your Father*, and to *my God*, and *your God*." Here *Chriſt* as a SON, not only intimates his relation as the covenant head to his people, as covenant children, in their united relation to GOD, as their GOD and *Father*: But it is manifeſt, that he ſpeaks of himſelf in the ſame oeconomical conſideration, when he ſays MY GOD, as when he ſays MY FATHER. And as the one reſpects him as EMMANUEL, engaged in the work of redemption, ſo muſt alſo the other. This is indiſputably true, as well as plain, from the two phraſes being joined not only here, but in what is ſaid concerning his confidence in GOD, when engaging in the work of ſalvation.—(*) "He ſhall cry unto me, thou art MY FATHER, MY GOD, and the *rock of my ſalvation*."

5. IF it can be made appear, from what is ſaid concerning our Saviour in the New Teſtament, that the ſame things are predicated of him under the title SON, as under the names JESUS and CHRIST;—that the names *Jeſus Chriſt* and *Son*, are uſed promiſcuouſly as ſynonimous terms, when any thing is affirmed of him that relates to the oeconomy of ſalvation: It will certainly prove, that as the names *Jeſus* and *Chriſt* are *oeconomical*, that the title *ſon* muſt be ſo alſo, ſince they are uſed indifferently without diſtinction, that is, the ſame things which are ſaid of *Jeſus Chriſt* in one place, are ſaid of the *Son* in another, & *contra*. This, I ſhall

(z) John xx. 17. (*) Pſa. lxxxix. 26.

ſhall illuſtrate by ſeveral examples, from which it will appear, that by the terms *Jeſus Chriſt* and *Son*, in the New Teſtament language, we have preſented the ſame object of *faith*, *hope*, and *confidence*.

To give all the texts at large which relate to this ſubject, would be to copy a great part of the New Teſtament. I ſhall only ſelect ſome that reſpect the capital doctrines of chriſtianity, write out one for proof of each particular, and leave others equally to the purpoſe, to be compared by the reader at his leiſure.

CHRIST is called the head of the church.—(*a*) "*Chriſt* is the *head of the church*: And he is the Saviour of the body." So is the Son,—(*b*) "Giving thanks to the Father,—who hath tranſlated us into the kingdom of his *dear Son*,—*he* is the *head of the Body*, *the church*, who is the beginning, the firſt born from the dead."

ALL things were made, and are upheld by *Jeſus Chriſt*.—(*c*) "But to us there is but one GOD, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, *by whom are all things*, *and we by him*." Applied to the *Son*.—(*d*) "For by *him* (GOD's dear SON, the antecedent in the context) were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers: All things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt."

JESUS

(*a*) Eph. v. 23. (*b*) Col. i. 12, 13, 18 alſo com. Matt. xxiii. 8, 10. with Heb. iii. 6. (*c*) 1 Cor. viii. 6. (*d*) Col. i. 16, 17. alſo com. Eph. iii. 9. with Heb. i. 2.

JESUS CHRIST was *ſent* into the world for man's ſalvation.—(*e*) "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true GOD, and *Jeſus Chriſt*, whom thou haſt *ſent*."—The SON *of* GOD was *ſent*.—(*f*) "When the fulneſs of the time was come, GOD *ſent forth his* SON, made of a woman, made under the law."

HE is called *Jeſus Chriſt*, who was born of the virgin.—(*g*) "Behold, thou ſhalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and *ſhalt call his name* JESUS.—Unto you is born this day, in the city of *David*, a Saviour, which is *Chriſt* the LORD." He is called the SON *of* GOD.—(*h*) "He ſhall be great, and *ſhall be called the* SON *of the higheſt*. That holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, *ſhall be called the* SON *of* GOD."

JESUS CHRIST is the author of the goſpel. (*i*) "I am not aſhamed of the *goſpel of Chriſt*." So is the SON.—(*k*) "GOD is my witneſs, whom I ſerve with my Spirit, in the *goſpel of his* SON."

BY the *faith* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, ſinners are juſtified. —(*l*) "Knowing that a man is not juſtified by the works of the law, but by the *faith of Jeſus Chriſt*, even we have believed in *Jeſus Chriſt*; that we might be juſtified by the *faith of Chriſt*." By the *faith of the* SON *of* GOD they live.—(*m*) "The life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the *faith of the* SON *of* GOD."

IT

(*e*) John xvii. 3. (*f*) Gal. iv. 4. alſo com. Acts iii. 20. Rom. i. 3. 1 Tim. i. 15. with Acts iii. 26. 1 John iv. 9, 10, 14. John iii. 17. Rom. viii. 3. (*g*) Luke i. 31. and ii. 11. (*h*) ibid. i. 32, 35. ſee Matt. i. 21, 23, 25. and ii. 4. (*i*) Rom. i. 16. (*k*) ibid. i. 9. ſee Mark i. 1. (*l*) Gal. ii. 16. (*m*) ibid. ii. 20.

IT was the *blood of Jeſus Chriſt* that made peace with GOD, and purgeth away ſin,——(*n*) "The blood of *Jeſus Chriſt*, his *Son*, cleanſeth us from all ſin." It is called the blood of GOD's *dear* SON.—(*o*) "In whom we have redemption through *his blood*, even the forgiveneſs of ſin,—having made peace through the blood of his croſs."

JESUS CHRIST is the object of the ſaint's faith.—(*p*) "Believe in the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and thou ſhalt be ſaved." So is the SON.—(*q*) "He that believeth on the SON, hath everlaſting life."

THEY have fellowſhip with *Jeſus Chriſt* as the SON *of* GOD.—(*r*) "Our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with *his Son Jeſus Chriſt*. GOD is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowſhip of his *Son Jeſus Chriſt*."

IT was *Jeſus Chriſt* that *died* for ſinners.—(*s*) "When we were yet without ſtrength, in due time *Chriſt died* for the ungodly." A little after the Apoſtle ſays,—(*t*) "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to GOD by the *death of his* SON."

IT was *Jeſus Chriſt* that roſe from the dead.—(*u*) "He ſeeing this before, ſpake of the reſurrection of *Chriſt*. This JESUS hath GOD raiſed up, whereof we all are witneſſes." Applied to the SON.—(*v*) "Declared to be the SON *of* GOD with power,

(*n*) 1 John i. 7. (*o*) Col. i. 14, 20. (*p*) Acts xvi. 31. (*q*) John iii 36. alſo com. Acts x. 36, 43. and xix. 4. with 1 John iii. 23. (*r*) 1 John i. 3, 1 Cor. i. 9. com. Col. ii. 6. with 1 John v. 12. (*s*) Rom. v. 6. (*t*) ibid. v. 10. com. 1 Cor. i. 23. Rom. xiv. 9. 1 Theſſ. iv. 14. with Rom. 8 32. (*u*) Acts ii. 31. 32. (*v*) Rom. i. 4. com. Rom. xiv. 9. Col. iii. 1. Eph. i. 20. with 1 Theſſ. i. 10.

power, according to the Spirit of holineſs, by the reſurrection from the dead."

JESUS CHRIST is exalted at GOD's right-hand, having all power and authority given unto him.—(*w*) "Wherefore GOD hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of JESUS every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs, that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of GOD the Father." The ſame glory and dignity is attributed to the SON.—(*x*) "GOD hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by *his* SON, whom he hath *appointed heir of all things*,—upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himſelf purged our ſins, ſat down on the *right-hand of the majeſty on high*.—Unto the *Son* he ſaith, thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever; a ſceptre of righteouſneſs is the ſceptre of *thy kingdom*."

JESUS CHRIST ſhall come in great glory to judge the quick and the dead.—(*y*) "In the day when GOD ſhall judge the ſecrets of men by *Jeſus Chriſt*, according to my goſpel." Now our LORD tells us himſelf, that (*z*) "The Father judgeth no man; but hath *committed all judgment to the* SON."

WHAT puts this matter wholly beyond diſpute is, that the Apoſtles did not only make it the ſame, to

(*w*) Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. (*x*) Heb. i. 1.—8. com. Acts ii. 36. Col. iii. 1, Matt. xxviii. 18. Rev. xi. 15. Eph. i. 10. with Acts iii. 13. John v. 23. Heb. iv. 14. (*y*) Rom. ii. 16. (*z*) John v. 22. com. Col. iii. 4. 2 Cor. v. 10. Acts x. 42. 2 Theſſ. i. 7. with 1 Theſſ. i. 10. Matt. xxv. 31, &c.

to *believe in Jeſus Chriſt* and *the Son of God*; but they teach it as an expreſs article of his religion, that JESUS CHRIST *is the* SON *of* GOD.—(*a*) *Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that* JESUS *is the* SON OF GOD, GOD *dwelleth in him, and he in* GOD. (*b*) *Whoſoever believeth that* JESUS *is the* CHRIST, *is born of* GOD. (*c*) *Theſe are written, that ye might believe that* JESUS *is the* CHRIST, *the* SON OF GOD. (*d*) *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that* JESUS CHRIST *is the* SON OF GOD? *This is* HE *that came by water and blood,* EVEN JESUS CHRIST. (*e*) *And to wait for his* SON *from heaven, whom he raiſed from the dead,* EVEN JESUS, *who delivered us from the wrath to come.*" Here is plain divine teſtimony in abundance, expreſſed in as ſtrong terms as language will bear.

FROM theſe particulars, and many other that might be mentioned on this head, it plainly appears, that whatever is ſaid of JESUS CHRIST, is alſo ſaid of the SON OF GOD. The writers of the New Teſtament knew no ſuch difference in the uſe of theſe terms, as writers after them have invented: And ſeeing all things concerning the oeconomy of ſalvation, are particularly attributed to the *Son of God*, we muſt either admit that he is called *Son* with reference to that oeconomy, or that the account the Apoſtles have given of him, is extremely dark and perplexed;—very unlike the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the men,—and more unworthy the wiſdom and goodneſs of the divine Spirit that inſpired them.

PERHAPS it will be ſaid, (which is the laſt ſhift of ſuch as love to deal in *myſteries*) that there

 is a

(*a*) 1 John iv. 15. (*b*) ibid. v. 1. (*c*) John xx. 31. (*d*) 1 John v. 5, 6. (*e*) 1 Theſſ. i. 10.

is a *metonomy* in each of theſe texts, or one name put for another. If this is ſo, then there is more than one-half of all the religion in the New Teſtament, under the veil of tropes and figures: And ſo we can underſtand nothing concerning the *Son of God*, *our Redeemer*, and the way of ſalvation through him, but by the aſſiſtance of *Antonomaſia*, and other rhetorical figures. This at once deſtroys that well-grounded maxim among chriſtians: "*That all things neceſſary to ſalvation, are ſimple, plain, eaſy to be underſtood, and clearly revealed in the word of God.*" If this is denied, which it muſt be if the other is maintained, then the *Bible* is no longer of univerſal uſe to mankind; the illiterate muſt implicitly believe what the learned *critic* and *logician* are pleaſed to ſay is the ſenſe of every text in revelation.

6. ANOTHER argument may be taken from the ſeveral parts of that character, in which the *Son of God* repreſents himſelf, when inditing the ſeven ſhort epiſtles which *John* wrote to the *Aſian* churches. The whole, he challenges to himſelf as the *Son of God*, "*Theſe things write, ſaith the* SON OF GOD." If any unprejudiced reader will conſult the firſt three chapters of the revelation of JESUS CHRIST to *John*, * he will clearly ſee from the other parts of his character there mentioned, in what ſenſe he calls himſelf the SON OF GOD.

IT is the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, "the faithful witneſs, the firſt begotten of the dead, and the prince of

* This would be a more proper title to the book, than what it commonly bears, viz. "*The reveſation of St John the divine.*" For the firſt words of the book tell us, that it was "*the revelation of* JESUS CHRIST.

of the kings of the earth.—He that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto GOD and his Father;—behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they who pierced him: And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." The same who *John* saw in the midst of the candlesticks, of whom he gives such a glorious description, every part of which strictly belongs to his oeconomical character. "I saw one like the *son of man* clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle: His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass; as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.—Out of his mouth went a sharp two edged sword: And his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength." *John*'s description being finished, mark what he immediately says of himself.—"I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, *Amen*; and have the keys of hell and of death."

TO the *Philadelphian* church he says, "Behold, I come quickly,—him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of *my God*, and I will write upon him the name of *my God*, and the name of the city of *my God*, which is new *Jerusalem*, which cometh down out of heaven from *my God*: And MY NEW NAME." To *Thyatira* he says, "That which ye have already, hold fast till I come: And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations,—*even as I received of my Father*." It is very

very evident from theſe, and many other expreſſions, in what ſenſe he calls himſelf the *ſon of God* in theſe epiſtles.

INDEED ſeveral parts of the deſcriptions clearly point out his proper Deity, which tends to illuſtrate my argument; for as they are connected with others, which muſt be limited to his complex character and offices, and all ſaid of the ſame perſon, the whole muſt be taken as a deſcription of *Emmanuel* the *Saviour*, or it is impoſſible to form any juſt ideas from this ſacred account of him, which, I conceive, is the moſt ſtriking of any we have in revelation, and repreſents him as *Emmanuel*, the *Son of God*, in the cleareſt point of view.

7. ONE very clear argument may be taken from the *Son* being called the *image of the inviſible God*. I confeſs this is generally brought as an argument to prove that he is the SON, *as he is* GOD, the inconſiſtency of which, I ſhall conſider afterwards. In the mean time, let us ſee how far this part of his filial character is an argument for our preſent purpoſe.

JESUS CHRIST may be called the *image of God*, in the three following reſpects. (1.) As MAN, his human ſoul being the *holieſt*, *wiſeſt*, *beſt*, and *firſt* of all created ſpirits, made like GOD in the greateſt perfection poſſible for a creature. All the natural and moral perfections in the whole creation put together are not equal to what the human nature of the *Son of God* is poſſeſſed of: "*For in all things he muſt have the pre-eminence.*" In this reſpect, he may be called the *image of God*. But (2.) And more properly, as this glorious human nature is united to DEITY: In this reſpect, the perfections

tions of GOD himſelf ſhine through his SON, in the moſt reſplendent manner as EMMANUEL. In this ſenſe, the Apoſtle ſays, with the utmoſt propriety, "He is the brightneſs of glory, and the expreſs image of the inviſible GOD: Thus, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of GOD, ſhines in the face of his SON JESUS CHRIST. (3.) He is the image of GOD, as he reveals GOD to men, in the character of his *ambaſſador* and *repreſentative*: He repreſented GOD in the whole of the Old Teſtament oeconomy, and by his works ſhewed his power under the New: He is veſted with ſovereign dominion over all things in heaven and earth,—is appointed heir and LORD of all things,—the king of kings, and LORD of LORDS. As *Adam*, in his dominion over the creatures, was the *image of God*, much more is the *Son of God*, the glorious *image of God*, in his ſovereign dominion over the upper and lower worlds.

ALL the moral perfections of GOD are manifeſted by him. "No man hath ſeen GOD at any time, the only begotten SON, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.—All the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge are in him. The fulneſs of Deity dwells in him bodily." His character is the brighteſt diſplay of divine perfections. As the law of GOD in its utmoſt latitude was *in his heart*,—his life is an exact repreſentation of its goodneſs and extent,—his death, a moſt ſtriking image and declaration of the *ſtrictneſs*, *holineſs*, and *ſpiritual extent thereof*: His laws and government are a diſplay of the *wiſdom*, *power*, *equity*, and *goodneſs of God*: Out of *his* fulneſs the ſaints receive the abundant grace of GOD: To them, "he is made *of God*, *wiſdom*, *righteouſneſs*, *ſanctification*, and *redemption*." The certain accompliſh-

ment

ment of all the promiſes of GOD,—and his threatnings upon his own and his people's enemies, is a clear manifeſtation of the *truth*, *juſtice*, and *unchangeableneſs of God*.—His appearing in the midſt of the throne of GOD, as the ſlain lamb, is a *living*, *everlaſting image* of the *infinite love* and *mercy of God*, in the *ſending* and *ſufferings* of his *beloved Son*.

UNDER theſe, and ſuch like conſideration, we may with propriety learn from the light of revelation, the divine beauty that ſhines in this part of *Chriſt*'s *filial* character, the *image of God*, to our ſpiritual comfort and edification. But we come to another argument.

8. ALL the fundamental articles of faith neceſſary to ſalvation, are plain, familiar, eaſy to be underſtood, and clearly revealed in the word of GOD; but the *belief of Jeſus Chriſt* being the *Son of God*, is made neceſſary to ſalvation: Therefore, it muſt be eaſy to be underſtood, and clearly revealed in the word of GOD. I need not ſtand to prove the *major* or firſt propoſition, as it is granted by every *Proteſtant* who know his own principles. But with relation to the preſent ſubject, it may be obſerved, that as all true religion is practical, and is attained through knowledge of the object, it muſt therefore be neceſſary that we know in whom we believe: And as the only means of ſaving knowledge is divine revelation, it will follow, that the object of our faith muſt be clearly revealed therein. It cannot be ſuppoſed, that it is conſiſtent with the wiſdom and goodneſs of GOD, to leave that under the veil of *ineffable myſtery*, the knowledge of which he hath made abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation.

AND

AND there is nothing more evident in the New Teſtament, than the neceſſity of believing that JESUS CHRIST *is the* SON *of* GOD, which the following texts, among many, put beyond doubt. (*a*) "Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that JESUS *is the* SON *of* GOD, GOD dwelleth in him, and he in GOD. But theſe things are written, that ye might believe that JESUS is the *Chriſt*, the SON *of* GOD, and that believing, ye might have life through his name. He that believeth on *him*, is *not condemned*: But he that *believeth not*, is *condemned already*, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten SON *of* GOD. Whoſoever *denieth the Son*, the ſame hath not the Father. And *Philip* ſaid, if thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayeſt. And he anſwered, *I believe that* JESUS CHRIST *is the* SON *of* GOD: And he baptiſed him. Theſe things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the SON *of* GOD; *that ye may know* that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the SON *of* GOD. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life: And he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life*; but the *wrath of* GOD *abideth on him.*

NOW from premiſes ſo evident, the concluſion may with ſafety be admitted, that the *ſonſhip of Chriſt* muſt be eaſily underſtood, and clearly revealed in the word of GOD. Then the doctrine of his being *a Son, as he is* GOD, muſt be given up; becauſe all the ſupporters thereof, acknowledge it to be an *ineffable myſtery, ſo inconceivable, that no man can know it.* But as the *oeconomical character* of our *Lord* and *Saviour* is every where clearly

(*a*) 1 John iv. 15. John xx. 31. ibid. iii. 18. 1 John ii 23. Acts viii. 37, 38. 1 John v. 13. John iii. 36.

clearly taught in revelation, yea, is the ſubſtance of both Old and New Teſtaments, we may without heſitation affirm, that it is in *that ſenſe* the ſcripture makes the knowledge and belief of his character as the SON *of* GOD, *neceſſary to ſalvation.* This natively leads to another argument or reaſon why it muſt be ſo.

9. AS the ſcriptures make *believing in the* SON *of* GOD *neceſſary to ſalvation*, of conſequence there muſt be that in him *as a Son*, which is directly ſuitable to the ſinful and miſerable ſtate of mankind,—which renders him a proper object of their *deſire*, *dependence*, and *hope*. Now, this is not the *Deity abſtractedly* conſidered; for we cannot ſuppoſe him under that conſideration to have the leaſt relation to creatures, much leſs to ſinful apoſtate men: And tho' we ſuppoſe the relation of *creator* and *creatures* betwixt GOD and *ſinful men*; yet, if we do not alſo take in the conſideration of the *Son's complex character*, in which he ſtands related to them as their *kinſman*, and conſequently their *ſurety* and *redeemer*, there is nothing in him, that we know of, that is more ſuitable to the miſerable caſe of men, *as ſinners*, than there is to the hopeleſs caſe of *Devils*, to whom he is under no ſuch relation. All the *love*, *mercy*, and *grace* of GOD communicated to men, flow through *his Son*, in whom they are choſen: Nay, all that is known of GOD is in *Chriſt*, for OUT OF HIM † the ſcriptures do not reveal any GOD but heathen ones.

BUT

† "That GOD OUT OF CHRIST is a conſuming fire," is a ſentence that paſſes for ſacred writ, I own; I was myſelf ſo far deceived through the prejudice of education, that I uſed it as a text in a former publication; but am now ſatisfied, that neither the

BUT conſider the *Son of God* under the *relative* characters and *offices* he ſuſtains, as the *glorious Emmanuel*, the *Saviour of men*, with his *all-ſufficient capacity* to fulfil theſe *offices*, which he in *ſo great condeſcenſion* was clothed with; in this light, he is a comforting ſight to a *poor*, *periſhing*, *convinced ſinner*, who is void of all hopes of ſalvation any other way. When the wretch, purſued with the curſe, and ſtung with a ſenſe of poignant guilt, beholds the *glorious* EMMANUEL, appointed a *Prophet* to enlighten his darkened ſoul,—a *Prieſt* to atone for his numberleſs ſins, and manage his cauſe by appearing in the preſence of GOD for him,—a *king* to rule, influence, and defend him againſt all the combined powers of ſin and hell,—and *all-ſufficient* for theſe ſacred purpoſes; how happy muſt the poor ſoul be, who is thus through the power of his divine Spirit determined to truſt in *him*, who is every way ſuitable for all he wants, or can deſire in time and for ever?

10. THE ground of our *adoption*, and right to the *privileges of ſons*, are laid in the *filiation* or *ſonſhip of Chriſt*, taken in connexion with the *free love* of GOD, as the ſpring of his chuſing us in him, to be heirs of GOD, and joint heirs with *Chriſt*. The ſcriptures prove this; but I can no ways agree with thoſe, who make it an argument for a *natural* and *neceſſary ſonſhip* in *Chriſt*; for the propoſition if once admitted to be true, proves the contrary.

the words, nor the ſentiments they convey, are in revelation, but like many other things, which cuſtom only hath made canonical. I mention this, to ſhew the danger of taking things upon truſt, and neglecting to examine the ſentiments we have been nurſed up in, many of which are not authenticated from ſcripture.

IF *believers ſonſhip* is founded upon a *neceſſary ſonſhip in Chriſt*, it will neceſſarily follow, that their ſonſhip is *neceſſary* alſo: For a neceſſary cauſe, muſt produce a neceſſary effect. It muſt alſo follow, that the ſalvation of ſinners was neceſſary in GOD. Where then will we find room for the leaſt veſtige of the *ſovereign love*,—the *free will*, or even the *mercy* or *grace of God*? If the ſonſhip of *Chriſt* was *natural* and *neceſſary*, it could in no wiſe depend upon the *will of God*: And if the ſonſhip of believers is an *effect* of this *natural* ſonſhip, then it muſt not depend on the *will of God*, more than the *cauſe* from which it doth flow. This makes our adoption, with the whole of redemption by *Chriſt Jeſus*, to flow from *neceſſity*, not from the *good pleaſure of the will of God*.

ALL GOD'S children are made ſo by *diſpoſition*, founded in *ſovereign love* and grace; but is there, or can there be any connexion betwixt a *natural ſonſhip of Chriſt*, and a ſonſhip founded in *love* and *grace*? unleſs we can ſuppoſe that *Chriſt*'s relation to his people, is *natural* and neceſſary to him, in the ſame way as his ſonſhip is pretended to be. But in this caſe, it would unhappily follow, that it would no longer be a diſpoſition of *grace*, but of *neceſſity*; which not only overthrows the whole plan of redeeming *love* and *grace*, but is a plain contradiction in terms.

JESUS CHRIST in the tranſaction which he *voluntarily* aſſumed, became the *kinſman* and *elder brother* of all who were choſen in him, as the objects of JEHOVAH'S *love*,—ſons and children by *immutable promiſe made to him*, and who in time ſhould be actually adopted,—taken into the *family of God*, and made partakers of all the *privileges of ſons*,

ſons, by virtue of that infallible engagement of JEHOVAH (who had choſen them) to *his Son*, their head and repreſentative; and through the divine efficacy of that redemption wrought for them, in ſhedding his precious blood, that they might *actually* enjoy the favour of GOD, and fellowſhip with him. Thus they are made partakers of a *divine nature*, and poſſeſſors of the inheritance they were choſen to in *Chriſt Jeſus*, which they had incapacitated themſelves for the enjoyment of, being alienated from the life of GOD, and by apoſtaſy liable to the curſe; all which, the *Son of God*, their *kinſman*, came down to redeem them from, by being made a curſe for them.

IN this light there is a connexion ſupported by revelation, betwixt the *ſonſhip of Chriſt, as the elder brother* in the family of GOD, and the ſaints *ſonſhip, as younger brethren, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt*. This will appear ſtill more obvious, by a little attention to the different characters and privileges of the ſaints, as *ſons of God*, all which, have relation to ſome *name, appellation*, or *office* given to *Chriſt* in ſcripture. Are they called the *redeemed, ranſomed, ſaved, purchaſed?* Or, is *redemption, ſalvation*, and *liberty* their privileges? He bears the names and offices of *Kinſman, Redeemer, Saviour, Goal*, &c. Are they called *bride, ſpouſe, flock*, &c? He is the *Bridegroom, Huſband, Shepherd*, &c. Are they *begotten of* GOD? He is the *only begotten Son of God*. Are they *ſons* and *children*? He is the *holy child, Jeſus, the beloved Son of God*.

NOW if theſe, and all the other privileges of the ſaints refer to, or flow from ſome one part or other of the complex character of *Emmanuel*, as they

they indiſputably do, why ſhould not this of their being *ſons of* GOD, have a reference to him under the ſame conſideration? There is a ſtrict analogy betwixt the *ſonſhip* of believers, and the *ſonſhip* of *Chriſt* in his oeconomical character. They are in ſome meaſure *reciprocal* and *correlative*, as the exiſtence of the one depends upon the exiſtence of the other. They are *both* of the *ſame family*,—*both heirs* of the *ſame inheritance*: He is not aſhamed to call *them brethren*,—and the *ſame* GOD *is the Father of both*. Hence he ſays, "I aſcend to *my Father* and *your Father*, to *my* GOD and *your* GOD."

BUT no one can have the leaſt idea of any analogy or connexion betwixt the *ſonſhip* of *ſaints*, and an *eternal*, *natural*, and *neceſſary ſonſhip*. It is not becauſe GOD is eternally, naturally, and neceſſarily holy, juſt, and good, that his people are made holy, juſt, and good; but becauſe he hath of his ſovereign love and good pleaſure made them ſo in his *Son Jeſus Chriſt*. All that the ſaints enjoy, flows from the *free will of* GOD, and not from *neceſſity* in his *nature*, which would be the conſequence if their ſonſhip depended upon a natural ſonſhip in *Chriſt*.

I MUST now conſider ſome texts, from which arguments are drawn againſt the doctrine I have been endeavouring to maintain: And, I preſume the impartial reader will ſee, not only how little they are againſt *this ſenſe* of *Chriſt*'s ſonſhip; but how eaſily the texts may be accommodated to the ſupport of it; and therefore may be conſidered as ſo many more arguments in its defence.

Object. THE objection that moſt weight ſeems to be laid on, is taken from what the Apoſtle ſays, *Moſes*

—(*a*) "*Moſes* verily was faithful in all his houſe, as a *ſervant*. But *Chriſt*, *as a ſon*, over his own houſe: Whoſe houſe are we." From which it is thus argued, that to limit the ſonſhip of *Chriſt* to his complex character as *Emmanuel*, muſt deſtroy the diſtinction betwixt *Chriſt* as a SON, and as a SERVANT, and ſpoil the beauty of the antitheſis betwixt *Moſes* and *Chriſt* in this paſſage."

Anſ. IT has been made manifeſt above, that to believe in *Jeſus Chriſt*, and to believe in the SON *of* GOD, are of the ſame import; both muſt include his complex character. So to behold him as a *ſervant*, which we are commanded to do,—(*b*) "Behold, my *ſervant*, whom I uphold,"—muſt be of the ſame import with beholding him as the *Lamb of* GOD,—and hearing or believing in him as the SON *of* GOD in New Teſtament language.—(*c*) "Behold the Lamb of GOD, that taketh away the ſins of the world.—This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed: Hear ye him." In all theſe characters, he is the object of our faith, and the ſecurity of our ſalvation: For the conſideration of faith in *Chriſt*, as it reſpects ſalvation, muſt include the conſideration of his complex character, whether he be viewed as a *Son*, a *Servant*, a *Saviour*, or whatever other name the ſcriptures repreſent him under to us, as in that character he finiſhed ſalvation for us, and alſo beſtows it upon us.

HIS being called a *Servant*, points out the abaſed condition he humbled himſelf unto, in going through the work of our ſalvation; in which, tho' he as EMMANUEL, was rich in the enjoyment

(*a*) Heb. iii. 5, 6. (*b*) Iſa. xlii. 1. (*c*) John i. 29.

ment of all that is divine,—in him were hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge,—in him dwelt the fulneſs of *Deity* bodily,—he was the bright repreſentation of JEHOVAH's glory;—yet for our ſakes, he made himſelf of no reputation,—became ſo poor, as to be more deſtitute than the beaſts of the earth,—calling himſelf a worm, and no man,—having no form or comelineſs why he ſhould be deſired,—deſpiſed, and rejected of men, a man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief,—was wounded, bruiſed, oppreſſed, afflicted, and at laſt humbled to the duſt of death. Thus EMMANUEL's glory, who was in the *form of* GOD, and thought it no robbery to aſſume the *names*, the *glory*, the *worſhip of* GOD, was veiled, and appeared in the form of a *ſervant*, *upheld* by the arm of GOD in the infinite work of man's ſalvation, who now (his ſervitude in ſuffering work being finiſhed) "hath crowned him with glory and honour, far above all principality and power, might and dominion, &c. And hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all."

TO anſwer the objection, we need go no further than the text on which it is founded, which makes directly againſt it; and will be found one of the plaineſt arguments in favour of *Chriſt*'s oeconomical ſonſhip. The text ſays, it is *as a Son* that *Chriſt* is over his *own houſe*. By the houſe here, muſt be meant the church, over which he is the governor and head. His right to rule, and the ſpecial relation he hath to the church *as a Son*, is expreſſed in its being called HIS OWN. The antitheſis is not betwixt *Chriſt* as a *Son*, and a *ſervant*, as

as the objection would insinuate: But betwixt *Moses as a servant*, and *Christ as a Son*. The former is highly commended for his faithfulness as a *servant*: But *Christ Jesus*, says the Apostle, was counted worthy of more glory than *Moses*, not only because he was faithful to him that appointed him the *Apostle* and *high-priest* of our profession, but because he had built the house, and being a SON, the *first-born*, the right of rule and inheriting was his over his *own house*, which he had this double right unto.

NOW, in whatever light we view *Christ*'s relation to the church, whether as their *head*, *goal*, *kinsman*, and *redeemer*: Or, as their *Prophet*, *Priest*, *King*, &c. we must include the consideration of his complex character. For the consideration of his being clothed with human nature, *actually* or *proleptically* by participation, is the foundation of his relation to the church, as the members of his body chosen in him, and his right as their *goal* to redeem them: Therefore, the sonship in the text, must have a respect to him as EMMANUEL, seeing it is in that character he is related to the church, and a SON over it as his OWN HOUSE.

BUT to suppose *Christ*'s sonship in the text to signify (as the objectors would have it) his *Deity* abstractedly, makes the passage wholly unintelligible to us. As a SON, he has a special right and relation to the church, as his *own house*; but what relation can we suppose any of the *divine three* hath abstractedly, more than another? Hath absolute Deity (which is what we know nothing about) any relation to creatures at all? Or, is it essential to the *Deity* of our *Lord Jesus Christ* to be the *head* of the church? Once to suppose this (which yet

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is an idea inſeparable from their notion of ſonſhip) would be to deſtroy the *ſovereignty* of JEHOVAH's *love*, in chuſing the church in *Chriſt*: And the *ſovereign, voluntary condeſcenſion* of EMMANUEL, in becoming the *head*, *huſband*, and *redeemer* of his church. Under that character, he is her *head*, and ſhe his *members*. Abſolute Deity, for ought we know, is at an abſolute diſtance from any connexion with, or relation to the creature, in any ſenſe whatſoever.

As we ought not to conceive notions of GOD that are not revealed; neither ſhould we too critically diſtinguiſh the revealed *names* and characters of the glorious EMMANUEL; but rather believe, and humbly admire his infinite condeſcenſion, in becoming ſo ſuitably related to us in his complex character as EMMANUEL, in which he exhibits the divine glory and perfections,—executes all the divine purpoſes concerning men,—and is the glorious medium through which the love, grace, and glory of JEHOVAH are, and ſhall for ever be manifeſted to his choſen. Thus he is revealed, and ſo they believe, and ſhall for ever behold the SON *of* GOD, in divine refulgence, having all things ſubdued unto him, who himſelf, *as a* SON, "ſhall be ſubject or placed in order to him, that put all things under him, that GOD may be all in all."

Object. ANOTHER objection is taken from theſe texts, where *Chriſt*, and *Son of God*, are both mentioned, particularly what *Peter* ſays,——(*d*) "Thou art *Chriſt*, the Son of the living GOD." From which it is inferred, "that as the term *Chriſt* refers to his *office*, the term *Son* muſt refer to his divine perſonality, or there would be a manifeſt

(*d*) Matt. xvi. 16.

feſt *tautology* in this, and ſuch like texts; as if *Peter* ſhould ſay, "thou art the *mediator*, the *mediator*." And this objection is reckoned unanſwerable, if the text is read as ſome critics tranſlate it, diſtinguiſhing the terms by what they call the Greek article THAT, "Thou art *that Chriſt*, *that* SON of the living GOD."

Anſ. THAT the terms *Chriſt* and *Son*, preſent us with the ſame object of faith as they are uſed in the New Teſtament, is proved above: But to give the objection its full weight, we ſhall firſt conſider how *Chriſt* is a term of *office*,—next, what is ſignified by the term *Son* in the text,—and then what ſtrength the uſe of the Greek article affords the cauſe.

AS to *Chriſt* being a term of *office*, let it be obſerved, that it is agreed on all hands, that *Chriſt* and *Meſſiah* are terms of the ſame import: *Meſſiah* in the Old Teſtament, is the ſame with *Chriſt* in the New. Now, ſhould I aſk the objector, whether he whom the *Jews* called the *Meſſiah*, was a *Perſon* or *office*? It would be reckoned of the ſame conſequence, as if I ſhould aſk, whether a *Perſon* be a *Perſon* or not? Concerning the *Meſſiah* it is ſaid,—(*e*) "The rulers took council againſt the *Lord*, and his *anointed*," (*Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*.) This paſſage would read, "They took council againſt the LORD, and his *office*." The ſame Perſon who is called his *Meſſiah or Chriſt*, in the beginning of this Pſalm, is a little after called his *king*, and his *Son*, which is anſwer enough to the objection. But further, *Daniel* tells us, that the (*f*) "*Meſſiah*, the *prince*, ſhould be cut off, but not for *himſelf*." This he could not ſay with propriety of an *office*.

A a Beſides,

(*e*) Pſa. ii. 1. (*f*) Dan. ix. 26.

Beſides, when *Peter* ſays, "Thou art the *Chriſt*," it would mean no more in that ſenſe, than if he had ſaid, "Thou art the *office*."

BUT there is nothing more plain than that the names *King*, *Prieſt*, and *Prophet*, point at perſons veſted with theſe reſpective offices; in like manner, the name *Chriſt* points out the perſon authorized by office, for the diſcharge of the great work he was appointed to: And if it be granted, as common ſenſe requires it ſhould, that the term *Chriſt* is not confined to the *office*, but to the *Perſon* bearing the office, then the controverſy is at an end, and the whole cauſe yielded, in as much as it has been proved above, that the ſame official characters are aſcribed to the SON, as to CHRIST. The plain conſequence is, that both terms point out the complex perſon of the glorious Redeemer, clothed with ſuch offices, who is no other than the bleſſed EMMANUEL; for it is only as ſuch, that he does, or can ſuſtain any office in the buſineſs of man's redemption.

LET us next ſee what is moſt likely to be the meaning of the phraſe, "SON OF GOD," in the text. This will appear exceeding plain, if the ſcope of the paſſage is attended to. Our bleſſed LORD had aſked the diſciples what the people's ſentiments concerning him were. They having told him; he next requires their own; when *Peter*, in the name of the other diſciples, anſwered, "Thou art CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD." Now, it muſt be at leaſt ſuppoſed, that the anſwer which *Peter* gave, was direct to the queſtion his maſter aſked in ſuch a plain manner: But the queſtion was, with reſpect to the character of CHRIST *as come in the fleſh*, "Whom ſay ye, that I the SON OF MAN am?"

am?" Therefore the terms in the anſwer, muſt include his human nature, or they would be no direct reply to the queſtion aſked. But that the anſwer reſpected his character as EMMANUEL, the ALL-SUFFICIENT SAVIOUR, is evident from our LORD's reply to *Peter*, and the ſequel of the paſſage. "Fleſh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven." What was it that *Peter* had revealed unto him? Surely the character of the perſon who was ſpeaking to him. The ſame that all GOD's children hear and learn of their heavenly Father, "That he hath ſent his SON, whoſe name is EMMANUEL, to be the Saviour of the world." This is plain from what our LORD adds, "Upon this rock will I build my church: And the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it." What is this rock on which the church is ſo ſecure? Surely the truth concerning the character of CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD, which the Father makes known to all his children, as well as to *Peter*, "For other *foundation* can no man lay, than that is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST. Brought unto the church, they "are built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, (the doctrine they taught concerning) JESUS CHRIST himſelf, being the chief corner ſtone; in whom (as a SON that builds his father's houſe) all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the LORD."

THE relative character and work of JESUS CHRIST, *the* SON *of* GOD, is the ſum of the chriſtian religion, and the foundation of the church's ſecurity and privileges, againſt which the powers of hell and earth are combined, but according to his promiſe, they ſhall not prevail. He next acquaints the Apoſtles, with a ſacred truſt that

ſhould

ſhould afterwards be committed to them, which at that time, they very little underſtood, viz. the opening up and making known to the world the doctrines, laws, and ordinances, of his kingdom, both with reſpect to looſing the obligation to *Moſaic* rites and ceremonies, and the eſtabliſhing chriſtian ordinances, which ſhould never be altered. This our LORD calls *the keys of the kingdom of heaven*. Thus they ſhould *bind* and *looſe* by the doctrines which they ſhould infallibly be directed to teach. † But as the ſuitable time was not yet come, for ſuch an open declaration of his character, "he charged them, that they ſhould tell no man that he was JESUS, the CHRIST." This muſt have a direct reference to what they had confeſſed him to be; and ſhews that the ſum of their faith, as they expreſſed it, was, that they believed him to be the true *Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*, if we will allow their *maſter* to be a proper interpreter of their creed.

IF

† I know this way of diſpoſing of the *keys*, will not pleaſe the kingdom of the *Clergy*, whoſe dominion over men is principally ſupported upon a notion, which they have in all ages taken great pains to cultivate, viz. That they are the Apoſtles *ſucceſſors*,—*Ambaſſadors* of *Chriſt* as the Apoſtles were,—have the *keys* of the *kingdom of heaven* committed to them, and ſo can open and ſhut at pleaſure; all which, are falſhoods impoſed upon the credulous multitude, to keep up that reverence and ſubjection expected from them, to ſuch as are more like *ſpiritual Lords*, than *ſpiritual leaders*.

If they are *ſucceſſors* to the Apoſtles, which of them was called, ſent, and ordained to this office immediately by *Jeſus Chriſt*. Which of them has the power of working miracles as a proof of his miſſion? If they are *Ambaſſadors*.—let them ſhew their commiſſion from heaven to make any *new laws*, or alter thoſe already made—what *new* revelation they have in truſt to men.—And to ſay they have the *keys* of the *kingdom of heaven*, is manifeſtly to rob *Chriſt*,—uſurp his throne,—and intrude upon his kingly office, who *alone* "hath the *key* of *David*, he openeth, and *no man* ſhutteth, and ſhutteth, and *no man* openeth. Behold, I have ſet before thee an open door, and *no man can ſhut it*. I have the *keys* of hell and of death." Iſa. xxii. 22. Rev. iii. 7. and i. 18.

IF more proof were not ſuperfluous, both *Mark* and *Luke* might be produced, as agreeing with their *maſter* in the meaning of *Peter's* words. *Mark* gives them thus, "*Peter* anſwering ſaid, thou art the CHRIST." And *Luke* ſays, "*Peter* anſwering ſaid, thou art the CHRIST of GOD." And adds, "And he ſtraitly charged them and commanded to tell no man, that thing," viz. that he was the CHRIST. It is therefore evident from the whole, that our LORD, and the Evangeliſts, thought this expreſſion, "the CHRIST OF GOD," ſufficient to intimate the full ſenſe of *Peter's* confeſſion; and we may ſafely conclude, that CHRIST OF GOD, and SON OF GOD, are ſtill terms of the ſame import and meaning.

IT remains to be conſidered what force there is in the Greek *article*, to make ſuch a wide difference betwixt the term CHRIST, and SON OF GOD, in the text.

THIS part of the objection might be very ſhortly diſpatched, by denying that there is any occaſion for the word *that* in the text, it being literally rendered in our *Engliſh* Bibles: But as the advocates for the diſtinction I am oppoſing, have the authority of ſome critics, and think the weight of their argument conſiſts in admitting them, I ſhall not diſpute the caſe, but rather ſhew how little they weaken my argument, or ſtrengthen theirs.

AND *firſt*, I would obſerve, that it is paying a very uncomfortable compliment to the unlearned multitude, to tell them, that the grounds of their faith, on which the ſalvation of their ſouls depend, are only known by a critical acquaintance with

with *Greek articles*, *untranſlated* in our *Bibles*. Notable doctrine for *Papiſts*, whoſe faith muſt depend on what the learned ſay, but cannot judge for themſelves, not having the ſcriptures in a language they know: Beſides, it may ſeem ſtrange, that the fidelity of the learned tranſlators allowed them to with-hold words of ſuch peculiar emphaſis; this amounts at leaſt to a ſtrong preſumption, that they did not judge them of ſuch importance as *ſome now* would perſuade us they are: But how far they are ſo, will appear by conſidering,

Secondly, The uſe and grammatical ſenſe of the word THAT, which they would here ſupply. It ſometimes ſignifies *the other*, as oppoſed to *this*. Sometimes it ſignifies WHO, when applied to a perſon mentioned before. When taken comparatively, it expreſſes the *eminence* of the *perſon ſpoken of*, above all others that bear the ſame name. In this laſt ſenſe it muſt be taken, if added to the text; ſo THAT CHRIST, THAT SON, will point out the peculiar eminence of the perſon ſpoken of, above all others that were anointed to be Prophets, Prieſts, and Kings; and all that bare the title SON *of* GOD: Or, that he was the very perſon propheſied of, and deſcribed by theſe characters in the Old Teſtament. And I muſt alſo obſerve, if the word *that* is uſed here, it cannot properly be an *article*, but a *demonſtrative* adjective or quality, pointing out our LORD to be *that* peculiar SON OF GOD, whom they ſo long expected, and who had a peculiar relation and likeneſs to GOD. But,

Thirdly, The critics are not agreed how often the word ſhould be repeated in the text. *Goodwin* and others, think it ſhould be read thus,

"*That*

"*That* CHRIST, *that* SON *of that* GOD, *that* living GOD." If this is ſo, and theſe articles (as they are called) have ſuch influence upon the terms in the *firſt clauſe*, "*that* CHRIST, *that* SON," they muſt have the ſame in the *latter*, "*that* GOD, that *living* GOD," and ſo the term GOD, and *living* GOD, will not be of the ſame import; but as different in meaning, as they would have the terms CHRIST and SON to be. But as I hope none will preſume to affirm, that they can make any difference in the ſenſe of the terms in the *laſt clauſe*, we may ſafely affirm they make none in the *former*; and ſo this mighty argument, after ſo much weight has been laid upon it, makes againſt the contrivers of it, and tends to ſtrengthen the cauſe it is brought againſt.

THO' the above objection is founded upon ſeveral other texts of the ſame import with that we have been conſidering, yet, it is unneceſſary to take particular notice of each of them, as I have choſen that which the objectors reckon moſt for their purpoſe, and what is ſaid on it equally ſhews the import of ſimliar texts where they occur. There are alſo ſome other paſſages of ſcripture which have been oppoſed to the above account of *Chriſt's* ſonſhip: But as they are rather brought as arguments for *natural Sonſhip*, or that *he is a* SON, *as he is* GOD, I judged it more orderly to conſider them among the other arguments produced for that doctrine. I ſhall *then* ſhew, that they are every one againſt the notion which they are brought to prove, and tend to confirm the truth of *Chriſt's oeconomical Sonſhip*.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

HAVING given the ſcripture account of the character of CHRIST as a SON, it is neceſſary that ſomething be ſaid concerning the *name*, *title*, *appellation*, or *character* WORD, which is given him. As it is owing to the prejudice of education, that the term SON is ſo little underſtood, I ſuppoſe, it will be found, that on the ſame account, the term WORD is applied to CHRIST in a wrong ſenſe: Whereby the ſignificant ideas which are conveyed by the uſe of it in the ſacred volumes, are in a great meaſure loſt to ſuch as are accuſtomed to take things of this kind upon truſt, as handed down to them, without being at the pains to conſult the ſcriptures impartially to find the true import thereof.

THE ſchoolmen's definitions of this term, as applied to CHRIST, are ſuch as no man can have any ideas of, without firſt ſuppoſing him to be a mere creature; as they are inconſiſtent with any notions that revelation affords us of *Deity*. Even they themſelves pretend not to know what is meant by the terms they uſe, and are therefore obliged to put this into the number of the *great myſteries* in religion, which cannot be underſtood, and ſo ſhould not be inquired into. This is a fate which many of the plain truths in revelation have been ſubjected to. Many critics have attempted to reconcile the inferior characters of the WORD to true and eternal Deity, by ſuppoſing that both a real *derivation*, and ſome *natural* as well as oeconomical *inferiority* may be allowed to belong to the LOGOS, even in his *divine nature*. But this, with other

other things of the ſame kind, I leave to thoſe who can defend the doctrine of a *derived* GOD.

IT would be of ſmall advantage to examine the ſubtle diſtinctions, which have been advanced on this point: Nor dare I depart ſo far from the preſent purpoſe. I ſhall endeavour to make it appear, that the term WORD, is part of the *oeconomical character of* CHRIST in the New Teſtament, and ſo muſt be of peculiar advantage for every chriſtian to conſider and know.

JOHN uſes this title of CHRIST oftener than the other writers of the New Teſtament: But wherever it is mentioned, it is plainly meant of his oeconomical character. *Luke*, in the preface to his goſpel, ſays, the diſciples "were eye-witneſſes, and miniſters or ſervants of the WORD." That by the WORD here, is meant JESUS CHRIST, and not the goſpel, as ſome ſuppoſe, is evident from the words; for with the greateſt propriety might the diſciples be called *eye-witneſſes* of CHRIST, as *Peter* alſo ſpeaks of their being "*eye-witneſſes* of his majeſty." But it muſt be a very forced conſtruction, and in effect ſaying, that *Luke* did not write good ſenſe, to call them *eye-witneſſes* of the goſpel, which would rather been *ear-witneſſes*, had that been the ſenſe.

BESIDES, it would ſeem very ſtrange in *Luke*, to write a preface to the hiſtory of the life and actions of CHRIST, and not mention to *Theophilus*, (to whom he wrote it) any name or title of the perſon whoſe hiſtory he was about to write: But this muſt be the caſe, if JESUS CHRIST is not intended by the term WORD in the preface,

for there is not any other word that points him out in it.

Now, as the WORD here means JESUS CHRIST, (for I can ſee nothing of any conſequence againſt it) this is one inſtance wherein he is called the WORD, in his *oeconomical character*; or the goſpel of *Luke* is not a hiſtory of him under that conſideration, which none will preſume to ſay.

THE Apoſtle, in his epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, ſays, (*a*) "The WORD of GOD is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of joints and marrow; and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." What is here predicated of the WORD, cannot with ſuch propriety belong to the *written word*, as to JESUS CHRIST, the "*living* WORD *of* GOD." The laſt clauſe determines the whole, as it is the very character he challenges to himſelf, (*b*) "*I am he who ſearcheth the reins and the hearts.*" And the next verſe connected with this ſhews, that it muſt be a *perſon*, not a *thing* that is meant, for the perſonal relatives are always uſed, which have no other antecedent than the WORD OF GOD mentioned before. "Neither, ſays the Apoſtle, is there any creature that is not manifeſt in HIS *ſight*: But all things are naked, and open unto the eyes of HIM, with whom we have to do." Omniſcience is here attributed to the WORD, which is not proper to the *written word*: And the ſcriptures certify us, that *Chriſt* ſhall judge the world, who muſt be the ſame with the WORD here ſpoken of, to whom, ſays the Apoſtle, we muſt give an account: Beſides,

(*a*) Heb. iv. 12, 13. (*b*) Rev. ii. 23.

ſides, it is added, this WORD is the "great *high-prieſt*, that is paſſed into the heavens, JESUS, the SON *of* GOD." This, with what the Apoſtle had formerly ſaid concerning the WORD, he makes an argument for the ſame thing, to encourage them in perſeverance and ſteadfaſtneſs. "Let us labour therefore to enter into that reſt, leſt any man fall after the ſame example of unbelief. For the WORD of GOD is quick and powerful, &c." Seeing the WORD is ſo powerful,—ſtrict in judgment,—irreſiſtable in operation,—critical in diſcerning the heart,—whoſe intelligence pervades over all,—whoſe eye beholds every ſecret thing,—to whom all ſhall give an account,—and who is paſſed into heaven in the character of the great high-prieſt of his people, JESUS *the* SON *of* GOD, "Let us hold faſt our profeſſion."

NOW as it is pretty clear that it is JESUS CHRIST, who is here called the WORD, it cannot be denied that he bears that title with reſpect to his *oeconomical character*.

THE Apoſtle taking his leave of the *Epheſian* church, ſays,—(*c*) "Now, brethren, I commend you to GOD, and to the WORD of his grace, who is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them who are ſanctified." What is here ſaid, agrees much better with CHRIST, than the *written word* or the *goſpel*, which is only the means or inſtrument for the purpoſes mentioned. It is CHRIST who *builds* up his people by the Spirit: He builds this ſpiritual temple, and bears the glory. The goſpel is the glaſs in which they

(*c*) Acts xx. 32.

they ſee their inheritance; But it is JESUS CHRIST that *gives* it, and puts them in poſſeſſion thereof.

PAUL in all his ſalutations to the churches, joins GOD and the LORD JESUS CHRIST together, and therefore it is agreeable to his own phraſeology, to conſider JESUS CHRIST as intended, by the term WORD, in the text: And it is the more probable, as it argues his *equality*, which would not be agreeable with reſpect to the *written word*, to be put on a level with GOD, in ſo ſolemn a recommendation. To recommend the ſaints to CHRIST, is an honour which is due to him, and no diminution of the glory of GOD; But it would appear otherwiſe, if the goſpel was here meant.

THE *Epheſians* are here *committed* to the care of GOD, and the WORD; but the ſaints are never committed to the care of the *written word*; for, from ſeveral other texts, we find *it* is committed to them. The ſaints are under the care of CHRIST their *ſhepherd*, *huſband*, and *Saviour*, who ſhall at laſt preſent them to GOD without ſpot or wrinkle. None but one poſſeſſed of divine perfections is capable to take the charge of the ſaints. They never commit themſelves or others to the care of any but *Chriſt*, and with the Apoſtle reſt ſatisfied with their choice. "I know whom I have believed, and am perſuaded that he is able to keep that I have *committed* to *him*, againſt that day." And at death, they are all of the ſame temper with *Stephen*, who with his laſt breath, and the greateſt confidence, could *commit* his departing ſpirit to the care of *Jeſus Chriſt*, ſaying, "*Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit.*" From theſe conſiderations,

we

we may conclude that *Jeſus Chriſt* bears the title WORD in the text; and that this is one inſtance more of his being called ſo in his *oeconomical character*.

AS it would be tedious to be ſo particular on every inſtance, I ſhall only mention two or three more texts, in which I think the term WORD is uſed in the ſame ſenſe. *Peter* ſays,—(*d*) "The ſaints are born of incorruptable ſeed, by the WORD OF GOD, who liveth and abideth for ever." Now *Jeſus Chriſt* alone is the *living word of God*. He tells us, that the ſcoffers in his time were (*e*) "willingly ignorant, that by the WORD OF GOD the heavens were of old, and the earth ſtanding out of the water, and in the water,—but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the ſame WORD are kept in ſtore, reſerved unto fire, &c." *Paul* ſays, (*f*) "Through faith we underſtand that the worlds were framed by the WORD OF GOD." The ſame WORD by whom *John* ſays,—(*g*) "All things were made, and without HIM was not any thing made that was made." *Paul* charges *Timothy* to (*h*) "preach the WORD." The words are, "preach the LOGOS," which muſt always be interpreted of *Chriſt*: And we may be very ſure that *Paul* would charge *Timothy* to preach the ſame he did himſelf, but he ſays, "we preach *Chriſt* crucified."

IN theſe, and ſome other texts, this title of *Chriſt* is barely mentioned, and we can only learn in what ſenſe it is applied to him from the ſcope and contexts, or comparing them with others of ſimilar import. We ſhall now conſider *John*'s account

(*d*) 1 Pet. i. 23. (*e*) 2 Pet. iii. 5, 7. (*f*) Heb. xi. 3. (*g*) John i. 3. (*h*) 2 Tim. iv. 2.

count of the WORD, which in ſeveral places is more explicit.

IT is a very needleſs inquiry which ſome have laboured much in, how *John* came by this term. If we believe the books which he wrote, to be part of the inſpired writings, we need be in no doubt how he came by the whole, without the aſſiſtance of *Plato*, *Philo*, or any other whom he is ſuppoſed to borrow this term from. My preſent buſineſs is to ſhew in what ſenſe he applies this title to *Jeſus Chriſt*, which he does more frequently than in all the New Teſtament beſides. If the paſſages are attended to, it will appear, that in every inſtance, the complex character of our LORD is included in the term WORD.

ABOUT to prove the truth and excellency of the *Meſſiah*'s character, and that *Jeſus of Nazareth* was he, *John* mentions ſeveral names applicable to him, whom he intended as the great ſubject of the goſpel he wrote, which he begins with this title the WORD or LOGOS. "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with GOD, and the WORD was GOD. The ſame was in the beginning with GOD." Here he declares three glorious facts. "In the beginning was the WORD." The ſcriptures copiouſly point out the ancient relation of *Chriſt* to the church, as the *medium* of communication betwixt GOD and men; in this capacity he was in the *beginning*, or the *beginning itſelf*, as ſome would render the text. "He was *ſet up from everlaſting*,—his *goings forth* were of *old*." And in this relative capacity, *John* ſays, "he was *with* GOD," and adds, "the WORD was GOD." By which he affirms the *Deity* of him he was ſpeaking of. This divine, by a character of EMMANUEL,

MANUEL, leads us to the knowledge of GOD. It had been well for the church, if theſe called *Divines* in all ages ſince, had taught by the ſame rule.

FROM the ſcope of the whole chapter, it is evident that the character of *Emmanuel* is the ſubject, whom he calls the WORD. No other could be ſaid to be in the beginning WITH GOD, which expreſſion the *Evangeliſt* repeats, to ſhew the certainty of the truth I am now contending for. It was he who came to *his own*, and his *own* received him not,—gives the privilege of adoption to thoſe that believe,—dwelt among the Apoſtles, whoſe glory they beheld,—who was full of grace and truth, of which they were made partakers.—He whom *John the Baptiſt* bare witneſs to, as coming after him and preferred before him, the latchet of whoſe ſhoes he was unworthy to looſe,—of whom he ſaid, behold the *Lamb of* GOD, that taketh away the ſin of the world,—whom he ſaw the ſpirit deſcending upon,—and of whom he bare record, that this is the *Son of God*.—The ſame *Son of God*, who declares and makes him known,—of whom *Andrew* ſaid to *Simon*, we have found the *Meſſiah*, which is the *Chriſt*;—and the ſame of whom *Philip* ſaid to *Nathaniel*, that *Moſes* and the *Prophets* did write. In ſhort, he whom *John* calls the WORD, ſays himſelf, that they ſhould ſee the Angels of GOD aſcending and deſcending upon him, which can be no other than *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Saviour of men, to illuſtrate whoſe character as ſuch, *John* declares he wrote his whole goſpel. "Theſe are written, ſays he, that ye might believe that *Jeſus* is the *Chriſt*, the *Son of God*, and that believing ye might have life through his name."

THAT no doubt might remain concerning the ſenſe

ſenſe of the term WORD, which *John* mentions in his goſpel, he explains himſelf in the cleareſt manner in his firſt epiſtle.—(*i*) "That which was from the *beginning*, which we have *heard*, which we have *ſeen* with our *eyes*, which we have *looked upon*, and our hands have *handled* of the WORD *of life*; for *the life* was manifeſted, &c." He refers to the very *ſenſes* for evidence, that the ſame *Jeſus*, whom they had *heard*, *ſeen*, and *felt*, was the WORD *of life*, or the *living* WORD: And if we once admit that *John* is to be credited, ſophiſtry itſelf cannot evade the force of his teſtimony. It is clear, and needs no comment.

ANOTHER paſſage of his is equally conſpicuous.—(*k*) "I ſaw heaven opened, and behold, a white horſe; and he that ſat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteouſneſs he doth judge and make war: His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himſelf: And he was clothed with a veſture dipt in blood: And his name is called, the WORD OF GOD." This deſcription is applicable to no other than the once *humbled*,—now *exalted Jeſus*, who is ſtill called the WORD, and of whom *John* tells us, he bare record.—(*l*) "The revelation of *Jeſus Chriſt*, which GOD gave to his ſervant *John*, who bare record of the WORD OF GOD."

I SHOULD alſo here conſider that text in 1 John v. 7. where the *word* is mentioned, but as that text is made an argument for the names *Father*, *Word*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, being *natural* and *eſſential* to *Deity*, I ſhall refer the conſideration thereof, 'till the arguments in favour of that opinion come to be anſwered,

(*i*) 1 John i. 1, 2. (*k*) Rev. xix. 11, 12, 13. (*l*) ibid. i. 1, 2.

anſwered, and ſhall very briefly add here, what I underſtand by the name, title, or appellation WORD, as given to *Jeſus Chriſt*.

LOGOS, which is rendered WORD, is a ſcriptural name given to *Jeſus Chriſt*, in both Old and New Teſtaments. The proper meaning of it is, *An outward declaration of God's wiſdom and will to men:* And as applied to *Chriſt*, the *Meſſiah*, the *Jews* and Apoſtles both meant, that he was that glorious perſon by whom GOD was pleaſed fully and plainly to diſcover his will to men, as being acquainted with all his counſels, and impowered by him to give laws to the world in general, and the church in particular, and rule them accordingly.

AGREEABLE to this account of *Chriſt*, as the WORD OF GOD, the Apoſtle calls him (*m*) "the *power of God, and the wiſdom of God.*" And ſays, "*that of God he is made unto us wiſdom.* In him are hid all the treaſures of *wiſdom* and *knowledge*. (*n*) By him is *made known the manifold wiſdom of God.*" With reference to this ſenſe of his name, *John* ſays, he is the (*o*) "*light* of men,—the *light* that *lighteneth* every man that cometh into the world,—(*p*) He that believeth on him, no longer abideth in darkneſs.—(*q*) He is the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*," as he affirms of himſelf. The *way* to the knowledge and enjoyment of GOD.—"No man cometh unto the Father but *by me.*" The *ſpirit* and *truth* of all the Old Teſtament promiſes, prophecies, declarations, &c. concerning the *Meſſiah.* Hence it is ſaid, "The teſtimony of *Jeſus*, is the

(*m*) 1 Cor. i. 24, 30. (*n*) Eph. iii. 10. (*o*) John i. 4, 9. (*p*) ibid. xii. 46. (*q*) ibid. xiv. 6.

ſpirit of prophecy,"—the revealer, beſtower, and exemplar of all divine truth,—the author and finiſher of faith,—full of grace and truth.—The *life*, (*r*) "I am the reſurrection and the *life*: He that believeth in me, tho' he were dead, yet ſhall he *live*. (*s*) I am that bread of *life*. (*t*) In him was *life*, and the *life* was the light of men. (*u*) The words I ſpeak are *ſpirit* and *life*. (*v*) He that hath the *Son*, hath *life*. (*w*) The purpoſe and grace of GOD in *Chriſt* before the world began, is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*, who hath aboliſhed death, and brought *life* and *immortality* to *light*, through the goſpel."

AND further, agreeable to this ſenſe of the title WORD, being applied to *Chriſt*, he is called the *image* or *viſible repreſentation* of the *inviſible God*.—(*x*) "The expreſs *image* of his glory." He makes known the inviſible GOD to men; hence he ſays, (*y*) "He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father. (*z*) I will *declare thy name* unto my brethren. (*a*) I have declared thy name unto them, and will declare it. No man hath ſeen GOD at any time; the only begotten *Son*, who is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him."

THUS it is evident from revelation, that *Jeſus Chriſt* is called the WORD OF GOD, becauſe by him GOD reveals himſelf to men. *He* is the great *medium* of all communication betwixt JEHOVAH and creatures.—In *him* all the gifts of GOD are beſtowed.—By *him* the grateful ſervices of his people are acceptable with GOD.—In *him* are all the counſels and purpoſes of GOD.—By *him* they are all executed

(*r*) John xi. 25. (*s*) vi. 35.—(*t*) i. 4. (*u*) vi. 63. (*v*) 1 John v. 12. (*w*) 2 Tim. i. 10. (*x*) Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. (*y*) John xiv. 9. (*z*) Heb. ii. 12. (*a*) John xvii. 26. ibid. i. 18.

executed with infinite wiſdom and prudence.—*He* is the ſcope of the written word of GOD.—*His* character runs through the whole of revelation.—All that we now know, or ever ſhall learn of GOD, is in and by his *own Son Jeſus Chriſt*.—He may therefore with ſuch propriety as only divine wiſdom could dictate, be called the WORD, the LIVING WORD OF GOD.

WERE it of any advantage to this argument, it might be ſhewn, that the *Jews* generally meant the *Meſſiah*, when they wrote of the WORD or LOGOS. This is abundantly evident from their writings, tho' the paſſages would be tedious to cite: And it is alſo evident, that *John* made uſe of the term WORD, from the common acceptation of it among the *Jews*, to expreſs him whom they expected as the promiſed *Meſſiah*. ‡ But I think a point

‡ The *Jews* had five different ideas of the *Logos*. (1) That it ſignified GOD himſelf; hence they aſcribe the words and actions of GOD to the *Memra*, or *word*. (2) It ſignified ſomething in, or of GOD, whereby he tranſacted his divine affairs. (3) It is taken for that *Angel* who appeared ſo often, and aſſumed the names and titles of JEHOVAH, &c. and was worſhipped by the ſaints. (4) They frequently called him the *Son of God*. And (5) The *Meſſiah*.—We might fairly collect all theſe ideas from the ſcripture account of *Chriſt*. *John* plainly calls him *God*. "The word was GOD." And the Apoſtle as plainly calls him the *wiſdom* and *power* of GOD. He is called the *Angel*, or meſſenger of the covenant, by *Iſaiah* and *Malachi*: And in many places called the *Son of God* and *Meſſiah*. From the whole, the *Logos* or *Word*, is the *revealer* of divine wiſdom to men, the *medium* of divine manifeſtations, and divine tranſactions: This he was before his appearing in fleſh, and ſhall continue to be till the oeconomy of GOD is finiſhed.

It is remarkable in ſcripture, that tho' the term *Father* often includes the divine three: And it is ſaid GOD is HOLY, and GOD is a SPIRIT, which are likewiſe inclusive terms: Yet the terms WORD and SON, never include any more than *one*, and are *peculiarly* applied to him only. This ſeems to point out, that the meaning of theſe names muſt be ſought in a certain reſpect, wherein he that bears them is peculiarly diſtinguiſhed; and that is certainly

point of doctrine ſo very evident from revelation, needs no aſſiſtance from human authorities, either *Jewiſh* or *chriſtian*.

tainly in his being EMMANUEL, and the offices he ſuſtains in that character, to which, together with what he did in it, all ſuch terms as *Word*, *Son*, *Jeſus*, *Meſſiah*, &c. are properly applicable, as well as his being ſaid to be *begotten*, *ſent*, *glorified*, &c.

The names he aſſumed are all ſuited to the needs and wants of ſinners, and have a relation to his character as OIKONOMOS, a ſteward or diſpenſer of grace,—OIKODOMOS, a builder of his church, the houſe of GOD,—or LOGOS, a revealer of the mind and will of GOD. All belonging to the oeconomy of ſaving ſinners, ſetting them at liberty, and beſtowing gracious gifts upon them.

SECT.

SECT. V.

HAVING ſhewed what the ſcriptures teach us concerning the oeconomical characters of *Father* and *Son*, the next inquiry ſhould be into what we learn from them of the *Holy Ghoſt*. I have proved that he is GOD, from the *names*, *perfections*, and *works*, proper only to GOD, being aſcribed to him: And ſhall now very briefly hint ſome things, to ſhew that his ſcripture character is *oeconomical*. As to the notion commonly received of a *natural*, *neceſſary*, and *eternal proceſſion* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, from the *Father* and the *Son*, it is what I cannot find the leaſt authority for in revelation.

THE only text alledged for proof of *eternal proceſſion* is what our *Lord* ſays,—(*b*) "When the comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the *Father*, even the *ſpirit* of *truth*, which *proceedeth* from the *Father*, he ſhall teſtify of me." The Spirit *proceeding from the Father* here, is manifeſtly ſpoken of his *miſſion*, not of his "*eſſence* or *divine perſonality*," as is ſuppoſed. Our LORD is there telling his diſciples, how inexcuſable the *Jews* were in continuing their hatred and reſentment againſt him, after he had done ſo many great works before them, which were ſufficient to convince them that he was ſent of GOD, and the true *Meſſiah*, had not their inveterate prejudices ſo blinded them to every kind of evidence. At the ſame time he intimates to them, what *they* might expect from the *Jews*, for bearing teſtimony to the truth of his character: But for their comfort in view

(*b*) John xv. 26.

view of ſuch difficulties, he informs them, that he would "ſend the comforter as *another witneſs from the Father*, even the *Spirit of truth*, who proceeds or comes out from the *Father*, and *he ſhould teſtify of him.*" The whole reſpects the greatneſs of the evidence, which he promiſes to add to what he had formerly given, concerning the truth of his being the *Meſſiah*.

It is very ſtrange how ſo plain words ſhould be *ſo far* miſtaken, as to be applied to any other purpoſe: But it is ſtill more ſtrange to find a meaning impoſed upon them, which neither they, nor any other text in revelation have the leaſt relation to. But the text muſt be clouded with *myſtery*, that thoſe who deal in *myſteries* may find out the *human myſtery* of *eternal proceſſion* from it, or that doctrine would be without ſhadow of proof in ſcripture. It might be aſked, how it comes to be imagined, that our Saviour, ſpeaking of his *ſending the ſpirit from the Father*, and the *ſpirit coming from the Father*, ſhould not be underſtood in the ſame ſenſe? The one muſt be oeconomical; why not the other?

The ſupporters of this doctrine will have the Spirit to proceed *naturally* and *eternally* from the Son, as well as from the Father, tho' there is not the leaſt hint thereof in this text, nor any other. If they reſt the *proceſſion* from the *Father*, upon the word *proceedeth* in the text, the *proceſſion* from the *Son* has not even this ſlender foundation; for the Spirit is no where ſaid to proceed from the *Son*. A very learned divine proves the point by the following remarkable argument. "When God is ſaid to ſend forth the Spirit of "his Son, it is evident that the Spirit is called the "Spirit

" Spirit of the Son, not on the account of his " miſſion, for that is aſcribed to the Father, but on " *ſome other account*; and what can that be, but his " proceeding from him as one in nature with him, " and in order of nature, though not of time, " being after the Son." This is all the evidence *he* can give for the truth of an article which he reckons neceſſary to ſalvation. But I ſuppoſe any one of common ſenſe will ſee, that he ſays nothing at all to prove it.

As the word *proceedeth* in the text is made the ground of *eternal proceſſion*, I aſk why the *proceſſion* of the *Son* by *nature* and *neceſſity* from the *Father*, is not made another article of religion? For there is the ſame reaſon for the one, as for the other, if our LORD is to be credited, who ſaith, "I *proceeded* forth and came from GOD." Now, this is never applied to the divine perſon of *Chriſt*: No, nor (by any that I know) to what they call his *eternal generation*: But is univerſally underſtood of his *miſſion*, and coming forth from GOD, with commiſſion and authority as his *miniſter*: And common ſenſe tells us, that to *come from* the *Father*, and to be *ſent by him*, are terms of the ſame import. Is it not then ſtrange! that the *proceeding* and coming forth of the *Spirit* from the *Father*, ſhould be ſcrewed up to an argument for his *eternal proceſſion*, any more than the other. As the proceeding and coming forth of *Chriſt*, ſignifies his *miſſion* into the world: So that of the *Spirit*, muſt refer to his *official character*, as a ſanctifier, and comforter, which part he acts in conſummating the great work of man's ſalvation. But it is impoſſible that one of the divine three can exiſt by *proceeding from another*, conſiſtent with their *equality* and *co-eternity*.

IT is maintained, that the term *Holy Ghoſt* or *Spirit* is *natural*, and *peculiar* to one of the divine *three*; but ſuch as do ſo, ſhould inform us in what ſenſe he is peculiarly *holy*, or a *Spirit*, that the other two are not. It is a pity that men ſhould pretend to ſee ſo far beyond revelation, and yet can render no reaſon for what they ſo boldly affirm. The ſcriptures ſay that GOD is a *Spirit*, and that GOD is *holy*; which muſt include all that is called GOD. The name, *Holy Ghoſt*, can therefore be no definition of any diſtinguiſhing eſſential property of one in the divine plurality: And ſo can have no reference to the internal UNITY or DISTINCTION among the DIVINE THREE.

HOLY GHOST and *Spirit of God* are terms of the ſame ſignification in the New Teſtament; and are expreſſive of *that part he acts in the divine oeconomy revealed to us in ſcripture*. He is called HOLY SPIRIT or INSPIRER, becauſe ſent by the *Father* and the *Son*, to ſanctify and quicken thoſe with a principle of *ſpiritual* and divine life, whom he enables to receive his teſtimony in the word. In this ſenſe, the *Father by office*, (or the part he ſuſtains in the great oeconomy) ſends him as a *witneſs* and *comforter*.—In this ſenſe, the *Son by office*, requeſts the *Father* to ſend him.—And in this ſenſe, the *Holy Spirit by office*, *proceeds* or *comes from* the *Father*. The whole of this will appear manifeſt to the impartial reader, from a ſuccinct view of the APPELLATIONS, MISSION, and WORKS attributed to the SPIRIT in ſcripture.

HE is called *Holy Spirit*, not to expreſs the *manner* of his divine relation to the *Father* and *Son*, or his exiſtence in *Deity*, as is commonly aſſerted; this we have no authority for in ſcripture: But

But rather becauſe he is infallibly *holy in himſelf*, and has inſpired *holy men* to write the word of GOD, full of *holy* and *ſpiritual truth*, by which he works *holy* and *ſpiritual principles*, *qualities*, and *affections* in his people, enabling them to perform the *holy* and *ſpiritual* exerciſes or duties required therein.

——— *The Spirit of God.*—Becauſe he is *ſent by God* to carry on the ſpiritual operations, which are neceſſary for completing the great oeconomy purpoſed by him.—And the *Spirit of Chriſt*, becauſe ſent by him to execute the application of the *ſpiritual work* of man's redemption.———*The Spirit of truth.*—He is the author of all *ſpiritual truth*, and the infallible teacher of it to others.——— *Spirit of adoption.*—He brings ſinners into the *family of God*,—conforms them to the *image* of their *ſpiritual Father*,—and witneſſeth the truth of their *ſpiritual adoption* to them.———*Free Spirit.*—Sovereign and *free* in all his operations,—delivers his people from all *ſpiritual bondage*,—gives them freedom in *ſpiritual* exerciſes, and acceſs to their heavenly Father.———*The Spirit of wiſdom and revelation.*—Infinite in wiſdom himſelf, he beſtows on his people eminent degrees of *wiſdom* and underſtanding in *ſpiritual* things by means of *revelation*, which he is the author of.———*Spirit of life in Jeſus Chriſt.*—His people dead in treſpaſſes and ſin, he quickens, gives them *ſpiritual life* in union to *Chriſt* the living head,—maintains, reſtores, increaſes, and at laſt perfects their *ſpiritual life* in glory with him.

HE is alſo called the Spirit of *Judgment*,—*Faith*, —*Love*,—*Holineſs*,—*a ſound mind*,—*of ſupplication*,—*grace* and *glory*. All which appellations evidently reſpect the oeconomy of redemption: So that we

may conclude, that *theſe*, with all the other names the *Holy Ghoſt* gets in ſcripture are oeconomical. In the ſame ſenſe are other words to be taken, which are predicated of the *Spirit*: Such as his being *ſent*, *given*, *poured out*, *coming upon men*, or *falling upon them*. But as theſe fall under the next head, I only mention them here.

THE ſcripture account of the MISSION of the *Holy Ghoſt* will further prove his character to be oeconomical.—But it ſhould be obſerved, that this *ſending*, or what is commonly called the *Miſſion* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, does not include the many great works aſcribed to the Spirit in the Old Teſtament, nor what is ſaid of him with reſpect to the conception and life of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Tho' theſe were great works, what is properly called the *Miſſion* or *ſending* of the *Spirit* muſt be poſterior to all theſe, for *Chriſt* always ſpeaks of it as a *future* event, which ſhould take place after his aſcenſion.

NOR does the *Miſſion* of the Spirit imply that he is not GOD, as the enemies to his *Deity* would infer from it; for ſay they, "As he is ſent by GOD, he is inferior to GOD, and conſequently cannot be GOD in a proper ſenſe." This argument would conclude equally againſt the *Deity* of the *Son* and *Holy Ghoſt*: And like moſt of the arguments from that quarter, is built upon a miſtake concerning the oeconomical character of the *Son* and *Holy Ghoſt*. But I have made it evident from ſcripture, that *Jeſus Chriſt* and the *Holy Ghoſt* are GOD, ſo that nothing can be inferred from his being *ſent* to prove that the Spirit is not GOD. Beſides, the argument is not univerſally true even among men, ſince by conſent and agreement among equals, one may be delegated to a certain work for others, who,

who, yet, are not ſuperior by nature. Whatever may be in this, it is certainly unfair to argue againſt plain ſcripture evidence in favour of the Deity of either the *Son* or *Spirit*, becauſe they are ſent in that character to fulfil their part in the oeconomy of man's ſalvation, in which particular reſpect, it might be ſafely granted they are inferior, without infringing their right to the honour and glory of *Deity*.

MOREOVER, as the Spirit is GOD, his being *ſent* cannot imply a *local mutation*, or change of place. This would make him a circumſcribed being, and conſequently not GOD: Nor can it imply the idea of *conſtraint* or neceſſary *ſervitude*, as the caſe is betwixt a maſter and ſervant. The Spirit is *free* in all his operations, and cannot be compelled. Neither does the ſending of the Spirit infer his want of abilities with reſpect to the work, either in contriving, chooſing the means, or accompliſhing it, which is often the caſe with one who is employed to execute the deſigns of another. What *Chriſt* ſays of the Spirit makes nothing againſt this: "He ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf, but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak." From which ſome would infer, that he cannot ſpeak the truth without being firſt taught it. Whereas the Apoſtle tells us, that "the Spirit ſearcheth all things, yea, the deep things of GOD." When it is ſaid, "he ſhall not ſpeak of *himſelf*," the meaning is, he ſhall not *forge* what he ſhall ſay,—or ſay any thing *contrary* to what *Chriſt* had ſpoken. That this is the idea conveyed in the words, might be proved from a critical conſideration of the original: But we have a plainer proof for the unlearned reader at hand, for *John* ſays, "The anointing teacheth you all things, and is TRUTH, and is no LIE."

THO

THO' the Spirit had inſpired the Prophets, witneſſed to *Chriſt* at his baptiſm, and tho' *Chriſt* "breathed on his diſciples, and ſaid, Receive ye the *Holy Ghoſt*," yet none of theſe is meant by the *ſending* or *miſſion* of the *Spirit*. "The *Holy Ghoſt* was not yet given, becauſe *Chriſt* was not yet glorified." He was not given in that *viſible, abundant, convincing*, and *glorious manner*, as after the aſcenſion of *Chriſt*. Every previous ſending, gift, or work of the Spirit, is as it were loſt in ſcripture account, when compared with that at *Penteceſt*; which was as *Peter* interprets it, the fulfilling of *Joel*'s prophecy, delivered in ſuch amazing language.—(*a*) "And it ſhall come to paſs afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all fleſh, and your ſons and your daughters ſhall propheſy, your old men ſhall dream dreams, your young men ſhall ſee viſions: And alſo upon the ſervants, and upon the hand-maids in thoſe days, will I pour out my Spirit: And I will ſhew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of ſmoke. The ſun ſhall be turned into darkneſs, and the moon into blood, before that great and terrible day of the Lord, &c." It was *Chriſt*'s baptiſing his diſciples with the *Holy Ghoſt*, and with fire,—a divine evidence to the truth of his character, and his being enthroned at GOD's right hand, and alſo of the Spirit's entrance, (ſo to ſpeak) upon the actual miniſtration and management of all things neceſſary to the kingdom of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. For theſe and other weighty reaſons, it is called *the* ſending, *the* giving, or *the* coming of the *Holy Ghoſt*, by way of eminence. Tho' this pouring out of the Spirit, was more ſtriking and viſible in the effects at *Pentecoſt*, and in the Apoſtolic times than afterwards, yet, it extends to all the churches

(*a*) Joel 2, 28.—31.

churches of *Chriſt* in all ages; for he was promiſed to abide for ever. He accompanies the word, and makes it effectual for the great ends for which it is ſent. The Spirit ſeparated from the word, renders it ineffectual to thoſe who uſe it.

We need not ſtay to prove the neceſſity of ſending the Spirit, ſince our Lord tells the diſciples, "It is *expedient* for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you." Notwithſtanding all the pains he had been at to teach the diſciples the nature of his kingdom, and what they had to do and ſuffer for him, yet they remained ſo remarkably ignorant of theſe things, through the reigning *Jewiſh* prejudices in favour of a temporal grandeur, which they expected by the *Meſſiah*, that when he was about to leave them, they ſaid, "Lord, wilt thou at this time reſtore the kingdom to *Iſrael*." But by the effuſion of the *Spirit*, their prejudices were removed;—they then underſtood what *Chriſt* had taught them,—and were prepared for the great work and ſufferings allotted them.

They were extremely fond of the *bodily preſence* of *Chriſt*, but as they were to be diſperſed abroad in the world, he could not be bodily preſent with each of them: But the Spirit was ſent to be with them at all times, and in all places. *His* preſence inſpired them with gifts ſuitable for them as witneſſes, to carry their teſtimony to the uttermoſt parts of the earth, enlightening their minds, and confirming them in the divine truth they taught,—endowing them with ſuch fortitude as they feared no kind of ſuffering;—they trampled upon torments,

ments, and the threats of kings and rulers of this world,—preached the goſpel in the face of death, and were regardleſs of what men or Devils could do to them. Now, all that grace, and all the extraordinary gifts which the Spirit was ſent to pour out upon the Apoſtles, and other inſtruments employed in propagating the goſpel, taken together, make only one great link of the divine chain,—a part of the oeconomy of man's ſalvation, wherein the luſtre of the love and grace of GOD appears to men: Which leads me next to obſerve,

THAT the *miſſion* of the Spirit is a bleſſing of the covenant of promiſe, and comes from *Chriſt*, as the head of the *church*, conſequently it muſt belong to the oeconomy of redemption. As it is the *promiſe* of the *Father* to *Chriſt*, he claims the *power* to beſtow it; accordingly he tells his diſciples, that they ſhould be witneſſes of his death and reſurrection, and in his name they ſhould preach repentance and remiſſion of ſins unto all nations; and for their encouragement, he adds, (*b*) "Behold, *I ſend* upon you the *promiſe* of the Father: Tarry ye at *Jeruſalem*, until ye be endowed with power from on high."

AS all the promiſes are in *Chriſt*, yea, and in him, Amen; ſo muſt this great promiſe of ſending the Spirit. Hence ſays the Apoſtle, "becauſe ye are ſons, GOD has ſent forth the *Spirit of his Son* into your hearts.—According to his mercy he ſaved us by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the *Holy Ghoſt, which he ſhed on us abundantly through Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour.*" Believers are "built an habitation of GOD through the Spirit.—And being fitly

(*b*) Luke xxiv. 49.

fitly joined and compacted together, they grow up unto him in all things, who is their *head*, even *Chriſt*." The promiſe of GOD is, "that he will put his Spirit within them." This *Chriſt* accompliſhed when he aſcended as head of the church, in ſending the Spirit to apply the great bleſſings he had promiſed and purchaſed. The order of this oeconomy is pointed out by the Apoſtle.——(*c*) "Elect according to the fore-knowledge of GOD the FATHER, through the ſanctification of the SPIRIT, and ſprinkling of the blood of JESUS."

AS I formerly hinted, the benefits of this *miſſion* of the Spirit extend to the church in all ages. *Chriſt* promiſed that he ſhould abide for ever, and it continues a diſtinguiſhing character of the world from the children of *Chriſt*,—(*d*) "If any man has not the *Spirit of Chriſt*, he is none of his." Thus the *miſſion*, or *ſending* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, proves his character as ſuch to be oeconomical.

BUT to make this ſtill more evident, we ſhall take a very ſhort view of the works aſcribed to the Spirit. It was proved above, that creation work is attributed to the SPIRIT JEHOVAH, and it muſt neceſſarily follow, that providence is another work in which he is intimately concerned. For it cannot be ſuppoſed, that any other carries on the ſucceſſion of individuals,—orders the various parts,—reſtores their harmony and beauty,—and directs to the end they were deſigned for, but him who at firſt created them. Hence, ſays the *Pſalmiſt*, "Thou ſendeſt forth thy *Spirit*, and they are *created*; thou reneweſt the face of the earth."

THE

(*c*) 1 Pet. i. 2. (*d*) Rom. viii. 9.

THE conducting *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs, is a work attributed to the Spirit.—" The Spirit of the LORD (the SPIRIT JEHOVAH) cauſed him to reſt: So didſt thou lead thy people." He qualified the rulers to manage the affairs of that great aſſembly,—gave wiſdom to thoſe who did the work of the tabernacle, according to the pattern ſhewed on the mount,—and alſo thoſe employed in making materials for the temple. In ſhort, he conducted the Prophets, Judges, and Kings, under the whole *Jewiſh Theocracy*.

HE inſpired the writers of the Old Teſtament. *David* ſays, " The SPIRIT JEHOVAH *ſpake by me*." And *Peter* tells us, " That holy men of GOD ſpake as they were *moved by the Holy Ghoſt*." The writings of the New Teſtament, were indited by the ſame unerring guide. " All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of GOD,—able to make the man of GOD perfect,—wiſe to ſalvation,—and thoroughly furniſhed to every good work." Upon this foundation the church of *Chriſt* is built in all ages: And notwithſtanding that fallible men were made uſe of in writing the ſcriptures, they were ſo conducted by the divine wiſdom of the *Spirit*, as to be free of error or miſtake, in what was intended for the ſacred canon of revelation, which is the ſure word of prophecy. " The things which we ſpeak, ſays the Apoſtle, we ſpeak in the words of the *Holy Ghoſt*."

ANOTHER work of the Spirit is, the giving to thoſe whom he ſent on extraordinary occaſions the power of working miracles, as a teſtimony of their being ſent of GOD. None can work miracles but by the power of the *Spirit*, therefore the Apoſtle puts miracles among the gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt*: yea,

yea, with reſpect to his human nature, *Chriſt* ſpeaks of himſelf as the *inſtrument* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, "I, ſays he, caſt out Devils by the *Spirit* of GOD." All the *ſigns*, *wonders*, and miracles done by *Stephen*, *Philip*, and the Apoſtles are attributed to the Spirit. *Paul*, when telling the *Romans* what he had done, ſays, all was wrought by the Spirit of GOD. GOD only, who governs the world, can turn the works of nature into an extraordinary channel,—do things above or contrary to the common courſe of nature.

A GREAT part of the Spirit's work mentioned in ſcripture, has a particular relation to *Chriſt* himſelf. Before his coming in fleſh, the Spirit had given moſt clear and glorious deſcriptions of him. "To him gave all the Prophets witneſs." He tells his diſciples, that the "things which were written in *Moſes*, the *Prophets*, and the *Pſalms* concerning him, muſt be fulfilled.—And he expounded to them, in *all the ſcriptures*, the things concerning himſelf. Search the ſcriptures, ſaith he, for they are they which teſtify of me." It would make a volume itſelf only to mention the deſcriptions of *Chriſt* in the Old Teſtament: But I cannot help taking notice of one thing, which is too much over-looked, that the book of *Pſalms* is in general a deſcription of *Chriſt*; and if it were read in this point of light, it would be much more profitable than to apply the ſubſtance of it to *David*, *Solomon*, or *others*. See page 91.

AS *Chriſt ſent* the Spirit when he aſcended, it would ſeem that the Spirit *ſent* him at his appearing in fleſh; for when ſpeaking of that time by *Iſaiah*, he ſays, "The LORD GOD and his *Spirit* hath *ſent* me." The HOLY GHOST framed the body of CHRIST, in the womb of the *virgin*. Hence ſhe

is ſaid to be "with child of the HOLY GHOST. The HOLY GHOST ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee." When he was to enter upon his public miniſtry, the Spirit led him forth to begin the combat with the *Devil* in the wilderneſs.

IN the power of the Spirit, he returned from his victory over the *Devil*, and begun his miniſtry, —opening his commiſſion with a ſolemn declaration, that the Spirit had *qualified* and *ſent* him to the work.—(*e*) "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, becauſe he hath *anointed me* to preach the goſpel to the poor; *he hath ſent me* to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of ſight to the blind, to ſet at liberty them that are bruiſed, to preach the acceptable year of the LORD." In all his miniſtrations on earth, he was aſſiſted by the *Spirit*, from whom "he had an unction above all his fellows,—the Spirit above meaſure poured out upon him." The Apoſtle ſays, "GOD *anointed Jeſus of Nazareth* with the HOLY GHOST, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed with the *Devil*: For GOD was with him. He was declared to be the SON of GOD, by the *Spirit* of holineſs." The Spirit raiſed the body of CHRIST from the dead.—"He was put to death in the fleſh, but quickened (reſtored to life) by the Spirit." And the ſame Spirit that raiſed *Jeſus* from the dead, the Apoſtle aſſures us, ſhall alſo quicken the mortal bodies of his members.

ANOTHER general part of the *Spirit's work* with reference to *Chriſt* is, his *bearing witneſs* or *teſtifying of him*. "When the comforter is come, (ſaith our

(*e*) Luke iv, 18, 19.

our LORD) the *Spirit of truth*, he ſhall *teſtify of me*." The great conteſt betwixt the *Jews* and *chriſtians* was, whether *Jeſus* was the true *Meſſiah*, the SON *of* GOD. To this truth, *John* ſays, the *Spirit* was a witneſs.—" It is the *Spirit* that *beareth witneſs*, becauſe the Spirit is truth." Our Saviour diſtinguiſheth betwixt the *Spirit*'s *teſtimony* and the *Apoſtles'*, " The Spirit of truth, *he* ſhall *witneſs* of me: And *ye alſo* ſhall bear *witneſs*."

THE *matter* or ſubſtance of the Spirit's teſtimony, is all the truths concerning CHRIST. So ſays he to the Apoſtles, " He (the Spirit) ſhall guide you into *all truth*." A compendious abridgment of which we have in the Apoſtle's anſwer to the *Jewiſh* Sanhedrim, who reprimanded them for preaching in the name of *Jeſus*. " Then *Peter* and the other Apoſtles anſwered and ſaid, we ought to obey GOD rather than men. The GOD of our fathers raiſed up *Jeſus*, whom ye ſlew and hanged on a tree: Him hath GOD exalted with his right-hand a prince and Saviour; for to give repentance to *Iſrael*, and forgiveneſs of ſin: And we are his *witneſſes* of theſe things, and *ſo alſo is the Holy Ghoſt*, whom GOD hath given to them that obey him." After a ſimilar account of the *miſſion*, *death*, *reſurrection*, and *exaltation* of *Chriſt*, *Paul* tells the *Hebrews*, " whereof the *Holy Ghoſt alſo is a witneſs to us*."

THE *manner* and *time* of the Spirit's bearing witneſs to CHRIST, was either before his incarnation,—while he ſtayed on earth,—or after his aſcenſion: Before he appeared in fleſh, in all the propheſies, promiſes, and declarations concerning him in the Old Teſtament. So *Peter* tells us, " Of this

ſalvation

ſalvation the Prophets inquired; and ſearched diligently, who propheſied of the grace that ſhould come,—ſearching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Chriſt*, which was in them did ſignify, when *it teſtified before-hand* the ſufferings of *Chriſt*, and the glory that ſhould follow."

By the ſame *Spirit* that *John the Baptiſt* proclaimed his advent, and pointed him out as the Lamb of God,—*Zacharias*, *Simon*, *Elizabeth*, and *Mary* ſpake of him. But when Christ was to appear publickly, he was declared at his baptiſm by the Father to be his beloved Son, to which was added, the witneſs of the Spirit; for it was told *John the Baptiſt*, that on whom he ſaw the Spirit deſcending and remaining, the ſame ſhould baptize with the Holy Ghost. Now, *John* ſays, "I *ſaw* and bare record, that this is the Son *of* God." This deſcent of the *Spirit* in ſuch a manner, was an extraordinary teſtimony to Christ, an honour never conferred upon any before, and ſhewed him to be the *holy one of* God, the *anointed* from above, the *king* of God's people, and the *heir of all things*.

But the ſpecial time of the Spirit's teſtifying of Christ, was after his aſcenſion, when at *Penteco/t* he appeared as cloven tongues of fire upon the Apoſtles, and cauſed them to bear witneſs for Christ in ſo extraordinary a manner, as to amaze all the ſpectators. No talents are competent to deſcribe the wonderful effects of the effuſion of the *Spirit*, in a more ſtriking manner, than he hath done himſelf, by *Luke* and the Apoſtles in the New Teſtament; the whole of which, after the four goſpels, is only an account of what he enabled them to teach, write, and ſuffer, as witneſſes for Christ.

This

THIS pouring out of the Spirit, was a plain demonſtration of the omniſcience and divine veracity of CHRIST, in accompliſhing his promiſe ſo punctually, and in a manner far beyond their expectations. It was likewiſe an ample fulfilling the Father's promiſe to ſend the HOLY GHOST. Both theſe are included in *Peter*'s account of that ſolemn event to the wondering multitude, and muſt be a moſt glorious teſtimony given by the *Spirit*, to the truth of the *Meſſiah*'s character.—*(f)* "This *Jeſus* hath GOD raiſed up, whereof we are all witneſſes. Wherefore being by the right-hand of GOD exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the HOLY GHOST, he hath ſhed forth this, which ye now ſee and hear."

THE Spirit was further a witneſs to CHRIST, in beſtowing extraordinary gifts upon the Apoſtles and others, whereby they were qualified to be peculiar witneſſes for CHRIST. Now, they could ſpeak the languages of the different nations intelligibly without learning them,—teach the truths concerning CHRIST with ſuch power and energy, as *Peter* by a ſingle diſcourſe converted three thouſand. This is one remarkable inſtance of the accompliſhment of what CHRIST had told them, "That they ſhould do greater works than they had ſeen him do." The converts to chriſtianity were but few while he was among them, but now converts are made by thouſands. The Spirit inſpired them with ſuch ſound doctrine, as it ſhould be worthy to complete the canon of revelation, and be called the *word of God*, which will in all ages be a glorious teſtimony to CHRIST, in converting and comforting his children, and confounding

(f) Acts ii. 32, 33.

founding all his and their enemies: And ſo abſolutely ſure, that if an *Angel from heaven* teach any other doctrine, the Apoſtle ſays, let him be accurſed.

THE effuſion of the Spirit, at and after *Penteceſt*,—the doctrines he taught,—the miracles he wrought,—the predictions he gave forth by the Apoſtles,—the gifts he beſtowed,—and the infinite power he exerted in bringing thouſands to the kingdom of CHRIST, make up ſuch a teſtimony to the truth of our Saviour's character, as his combined enemies, the *Devil*, the *World*, and the *fleſh*, can never prevail againſt. With reſpect to the extraordinary gifts which ſeemed neceſſary to the Spirit to beſtow at that time, the Apoſtle gives a comprehenſive view of them,—(*g*) "Now there are diverſities of gifts, but the ſame Spirit,—to one is given by the ſame Spirit, the word of wiſdom,—to another the word of knowledge by the ſame Spirit; to another faith; to another the gifts of healing; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another the diſcerning of ſpirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all theſe worketh that *one* and the *ſelf-ſame Spirit*, dividing to every man ſeverally *as he will*, &c."

I SHALL only add one particular teſtimony more which the Spirit gives to CHRIST, that is, his revealing CHRIST in the ſouls of his children. He takes the things of CHRIST and ſhews to the mind,—removes the habits of antipathy,—preſents him in all his beauty, and allures the heart to love, honour,

(*g*) 1 Cor. xii. 4, 8,—11.

honour, and obey him: Hence, the Apoſtle tells us, that "no man can call JESUS, LORD, but by the HOLY GHOST."

ANOTHER great part of the *Spirit's work* with reference to CHRIST, is included in his *glorifying him*. When CHRIST was promiſing to ſend the Spirit, he ſays, "He ſhall *glorify me*: For he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you."

THE coming of the Spirit as the *gift* of CHRIST, and by his *appointment*, glorified him. The greatneſs of the gift, ſhewed the height of glory and honour he was exalted to. It ſhews what divine power,—what unſpeakable favour he had in heaven, when he could ſend ſuch a meſſenger as the divine Spirit. It was the cleareſt demonſtration of his being the true *Meſſiah*, and the truth of what he had ſo often ſaid concerning the glory he was to be exalted to.

BUT further, the HOLY GHOST glorified CHRIST, by confirming the truth of his reſurrection from the dead. The Apoſtle makes the whole of the chriſtian religion turn upon the truth of CHRIST's reſurrection. It was the great conteſt betwixt the Apoſtles and the *Jews*, who held CHRIST to be an impoſtor, and his reſurrection fabulous: And it muſt be allowed, that if this truth is taken away, it is impoſſible to prove him the *Meſſiah*, or that the New Teſtament is any more than a deviſed fable: But the ſending of the HOLY GHOST put that matter beyond doubt. This was the uſe the Apoſtles made of it to the admiring multitude; the evidence of which was ſo powerful, as to convert ſome thouſands of them to the belief of it: And we find the Spirit directed

ed the writers of the books contained in the New Teſtament, to be ſo careful on this point, that there is not one of them in which this truth is not aſſerted, or proved at large from inconteſtable evidence, as being the leading argument to prove that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was the SON *of* GOD, and the *Saviour of the world*, who was dead, and is alive, and lives for evermore. To doubt here, is to call the whole of the chriſtian religion in queſtion.

THE HOLY GHOST glorified CHRIST, by taking ſuch an effectual method to wipe off the ignominy and reproach he was ſubject to in his life, and at his death. This was done with ſuch divine wiſdom and power, that even many of the *Prieſts*, his inveterate enemies, were convicted,—ſuch as reſiſted the truth were amazed and confounded;—Satan fell as lightening from heaven,—his kingdom ſhook to the center, and his captives were led captive by the power of the truth.—"So mightily grew the word of the LORD and prevailed!" The HOLY GHOST, as an advocate for the glory of CHRIST, proved all the accuſations and reproaches of his enemies to be impotent malice; and vindicated the innocence, righteouſneſs, and honour of the divine Redeemer againſt all accuſers; making his friends to triumph, and praiſe the "Lamb who had been ſlain, as worthy of all power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing."

THE Spirit glorifies CHRIST, in erecting a kingdom for him, and bringing ſubjects under his rule and government. This he does in oppoſition to all the power, malice, and craft of hell and earth,—in oppoſition to all the diſgrace he was under, and the popular prejudices which were ſo ſtrong againſt him—

him,—the natural or acquired enmity of the mind, and the diſconformity of the powers, policy, laws, honours, cuſtoms, profits, and pleaſures of this world, to the kingdom of CHRIST. Notwithſtanding theſe, and other inſuperable difficulties to all created power, the HOLY GHOST erects a kingdom for CHRIST, enthrones him in the hearts of men, whom he makes willing, loving, and obedient ſubjects, "built together a habitation for him through the *Spirit*, who inſpires them with courage and honeſty to propagate the glory of his kingdom, praiſe him as king of ſaints, and with holy ſubmiſſion ſay, "The LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our *king*, and he will ſave us." To this we may add,

THAT the HOLY GHOST glorifies CHRIST, by conforming all his ſubjects to his image. He preſents the glory and excellence of CHRIST in ſuch a point of view, as the enmity of their hearts is melted down, and they allured through the precioufneſs of his character revealed in the goſpel, where the knowledge of CHRIST is made manifeſt, which in them who are ready to periſh, is the ſavour of life unto life; and to them who are ſaved from the reigning power of ſin, is the ſavour of death unto death, or the mortification of remaining prejudices, evil affections, or corrupt paſſions in them. †

† Tho' the ſenſe in which I take this expreſſion of the Apoſtle, is directly contrary to the common interpretation of it, yet I humbly think it is the proper meaning thereof. He ſays, 2 Cor. ii. 14, 15, 16. "Now thanks be unto *God*, who always cauſeth us to triumph in *Chriſt*, and maketh manifeſt the ſavour of his knowledge by us in every place: For we are unto *God* a ſweet ſavour of *Chriſt*, in them that are *ſaved*, and in them that periſh. (are *periſhing* as it ſhould be rendered) To the one, we are the ſavour of *death unto death*; and to the other, the ſavour of *life unto life*." According to the plain connexion of the paſſage, the manifeſtation

They "behold as in a glaſs the glory of the LORD, are changed into the *ſame image*, from glory to glory, by the LORD the Spirit." As *Solomon* ſays, "they are more excellent than their neighbours," —all glorious within,—filled with his grace, they fulfil the good-pleaſure of his will, and the name of the *Lord Jeſus* is glorified by them. The former haughtineſs of their minds is brought low, and *Chriſt* their LORD is alone exalted. Created for his praiſe, they increaſe in holineſs, love, and good

manifeſtation of the knowledge of *Chriſt* was in the *ſaved*, the ſavour of *death unto death*, (not *death in the worſt ſenſe*, as the common opinion is, but) a *death unto ſin of all kinds*, which the ſaved in *Chriſt* die daily unto, and which the knowledge of *Chriſt* in the goſpel is the powerful cauſe of, agreeable to many ſimilar expreſſions of the Apoſtles. Rom. vi. 1, 2, 7, 8, 11. "Shall we (believers in *Chriſt*) continue in ſin, that grace may abound? *God* forbid; how ſhall we that are *dead to ſin*, live any longer therein? For he that is *dead*, is freed from ſin. Now if we be *dead* with *Chriſt*, we believe that we ſhall alſo live with him: Likewiſe reckon ye alſo yourſelves to be *dead indeed unto ſin*; but alive unto *God*, through *Jeſus Chriſt* our *Lord*. Chap. vii. 9. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I *died*, Col. iii. 3. For ye are *dead*, and your life is hid with *Chriſt* in *God*. 1 Pet. ii. 24.—Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree, that we being *dead to ſin*, ſhould live unto righteouſneſs." So that the *death* in the text, is the progreſſive work of mortification of ſin, which is the ſpecial privilege of all who have the true knowledge of *Chriſt*, and which is a *ſweet ſavour to God through him*.

But this knowledge of *Chriſt* in the goſpel, is alſo the ſavour of *life unto life* in them that are *periſhing*. The poor, deſtitute, periſhing ſinner, ſtung with guilt, purſued with the curſe, and void of all hopes of ſalvation from every other propoſed remedy, has the knowledge of the all-ſufficient Saviour in all his fulneſs preſented to him in the goſpel, which, by the power of the Spirit, is made a principle of new life in him,—deſtroys all thoſe vain hopes which wrought death in his ſoul, and makes him live a life of faith on the Son of *God*. This is the *death* and the *life* which are native fruits of the power of divine truth, manifeſted in the goſpel of *Chriſt*, and a particular part of the Spirit's work in the divine oeconomy, for which, the Apoſtle *gives thanks unto God*, and which is a *ſweat ſavour unto God of Chriſt*. But how ſhocking are the inferences which have been drawn from this paſſage! As if the knowledge of *Chriſt* in the goſpel, was the means

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good works. The chief end of their actions is his glory; and their higheſt deſire whether in life or in death, is, that *Chriſt* may be glorified in them. They have all the ſame ſentiments concerning *Chriſt* and his kingdom: This is a work by which *Chriſt* is glorified, which neither the power nor policy of this world could ever bring about, by all the ſchemes eſtabliſhed churches have been founded on. It could never be ſaid of any of them, that all the members "were of one heart and mind,—that they with one mind, and one mouth glorified God." This

of impenitency and unbelief, and conſequently of death and damnation to them that periſh. A thought every way unworthy of the goodneſs, mercy, and grace of *God*, manifeſted in the good tidings of ſalvation by *Chriſt Jeſus*.

There is another text, which for want of due attention, has been miſrepreſented in the ſame manner, 2 Cor. iv. 3. "If our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt. In whom the *god* of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, &c." Not to ſpeak of the abuſe this paſſage hath met with from the corrupt uſe which has been made of it, the way it is rendered, is neither agreeable to the Apoſtle's ſcope, nor is it good ſenſe: Whereas there is no paſſage of ſcripture plainer, if the ſcope is attended to. In the former chapter, the Apoſtle ſhews the excellency of the *goſpel* diſpenſation above the *Moſaic*, and begins this with a declaration of the honeſty, zeal, and freedom of the Apoſtles, in preaching the truths of the goſpel. "But (ſays he) if our goſpel be hid, it is hid *among the things that are aboliſhed*; *by which*, (things) the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of *Chriſt*,—ſhould ſhine unto them." By the things which are aboliſhed, it is plain, he means the *Jewiſh* ceremonies,—carnal commandments, the ſhadows and figures, together with the Levitical prieſthood and laws concerning it, that were aboliſhed and done away in *Chriſt*, which things being mixed with the truths of his goſpel, made it dark, obſcure, and of no effect, to ſuch as had this veil remaining upon their hearts, as the Apoſtle tells us immediately before. In this light, the paſſage is clear, and free of theſe groſs imputations upon the goſpel of *Chriſt*, which have been founded upon this, and ſome other texts. Tho' the brevity of a note will not ſuffer me to ſet this matter in ſo full a view, as to convince ſuch as are ſtrongly prejudiced in favour of the common interpretation of ſuch texts; yet, by this ſhort hint, the candid inquiring reader, will at leaſt, ſee the neceſſity of ſearching the ſcripture for himſelf, and the danger of taking religion upon truſt without examination, which too many are diſpoſed to do.

This unity is the peculiar privilege of the churches of *Chriſt*, framed by the *Spirit*, upon the principles of truth in the word.

THE Spirit glorifies *Chriſt*, by making known to his people the exceeding greatneſs of his merit, righteouſneſs, mercy, love, grace, and condeſcenſion; through a ſenſe of which, they magnify him who hath brought in an everlaſting *righteouſneſs*, by which they are juſtified and do glory. They ſay with *Paul*, "I was a blaſphemer, perſecutor, injurious; but I obtained *mercy*, and the *grace* of our LORD JESUS CHRIST was exceeding abundant towards me." They receive a fulneſs of grace that reigns through righteouſneſs to eternal life by JESUS CHRIST: And knowing all to be ſovereign and free, it ſweetens their eternal praiſe to him who *loved* them, and redeemed them unto GOD by his blood.

CHRIST is glorified by the Spirit, enabling his ſervants to ſuffer for his name. 'Tis the ſtrongeſt mark of loyalty in a ſubject to give his life and all he has for his prince. By this method, through the Spirit's aid, the ſubjects of *Chriſt* have carried his praiſe to the ends of the earth. But to conclude this,

THE HOLY GHOST glorifies CHRIST, in perfecting all the members of his body, making them meet to be partakers with the ſaints in light,—all ready to attend their LORD at his coming, when he ſhall be *glorified* in all his ſaints, whom the *Spirit* had taken from the depths of moral corruption and alienation from GOD,—deſtroyed the Devil's image in them,—conformed them to the image of the

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SON of GOD,—waſhed them in his blood, and now they are before the throne without ſpot, praiſing him, world without end.

WERE it not that I will be thought too prolix on this ſubject already, many other things might be obſerved concerning the *work of the Spirit*; for the ſcriptures afford evidence ſufficient to extend an account of this kind to many more particulars than are yet mentioned; particularly that great end of his *miſſion*, which our LORD mentions, "To reprove the world of ſin, righteouſneſs, and judgment," which, with the ſhort comment he gives of theſe three parts of the Spirit's work, afford undeniable evidence to the oeconomical character of the *Holy Ghoſt*.

WE might alſo have noticed the convincing work of the Spirit upon the redeemed,—his uniting them to *Chriſt*,—his work in their juſtification, adoption, regeneration, and progreſſive ſanctification,——in their conſolation, perſeverance, and growth in grace:—In his witneſſing the truth of their adoption, ſealing, leading, and guiding them,—in his giving them power to mortify evil habits, luſts, and paſſions,—reſiſt the *Devil*, the world, and the fleſh, and overcome temptations of every kind,—his ſtrengthening their moral powers to underſtand and mind the truth, from which as a living principle, they bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs,—his aſſiſting them in prayer, and other ſpiritual exerciſes of religion. Theſe, together with what the Apoſtle mentions as fruits of the Spirit, "The fruits of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance:" But to treat of all theſe particularly,

particularly, would be more like writing a treatiſe on the *works of the Spirit*, than defending a particular argument. I ſhall therefore conclude this account by obſerving,

FROM what has been briefly hinted concerning the *Appellations*, *Miſſion*, and *Works* of the *Spirit*, it is abundantly plain, that the character of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which we have in revelation, is wholly oeconomical: And that he is called *Holy Spirit*, and *Spirit of God*, from the nature of his work, which is all the internal and ſpiritual part of the great oeconomy, which GOD hath purpoſed to carry on in all ages, till the whole is conſummated in the complete felicity of the choſen objects of his love, in the full enjoyment of himſelf. And I think it will be impoſſible for the friends of a *natural*, *neceſſary*, and *eternal proceſſion* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to find any thing ſaid of him in the Bible, that in the leaſt favour *their* notion; or that is not applicable to the ſcripture account of the oeconomy of GOD."

IT may be further obſerved, that the *Spirit* is the ſovereign *agent*, LORD, and *adminiſtrator* of the whole goſpel oeconomy. The doctrines of the goſpel were immediately revealed by him,—preached by the gifts he beſtowed, and accompanied in many by external miraculous works done by his power, and made effectual as a renewing, active principle by his divine energy. The Apoſtle when comparing the goſpel diſpenſation with the law, calls the whole of it the miniſtration of the Spirit.—(*b*) "How ſhall not the *miniſtration of the Spirit*, (compared

(*b*) 2 Cor. iii. 8.

pared with the *letter* under the ceremonial diſpenſation) be rather glorious?" Which includes the whole of that ſpiritual work the *Holy Ghoſt* came to accompliſh in the oeconomy of man's ſalvation. The *Holy Ghoſt* ſpeaks of himſelf in the character of governor in the church, when he ſaid, (*i*) "Separate *me*, *Barnabas* and *Saul*, for the work whereunto I have called them." He carried on the work of *Chriſt*, and perfects that ſalvation which he was promiſed to be to the ends of the earth.—(*k*) "The comforter, the *Holy Ghoſt*, whom the Father will ſend in *my name*, he ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatſoever I have ſaid unto you." He had promiſed to be with his people to the end of the world, but ſoon after left them; yet *Chriſt's* promiſe is fully accompliſhed by the *Spirit*, who comes *in his name*, and "takes of the things of *Chriſt*, and ſhews them unto them."

(*i*) Acts xiii. 2. (*k*) John xiv. 26.

PART.

PART III.

HAVING in the two former parts given an account what the ſcriptures ſay concerning the Trinity; I ſhall in this part, as was promiſed, ſhew how little regard is due from chriſtians, to the ſubtle diſtinctions invented among men concerning that ſubject; and the difficulties that have occurred to me, in the conſideration of a pretended explication of that doctrine, which has been held pretty orthodox for many years paſt, and generally impoſed as an article of faith.

IT is manifeſt how copious and concluſive the ſcriptures are on this point, and ſufficiently explain themſelves by comparing one text with another, as far as is neceſſary for us mortals to know, without the leaſt neceſſity for the ſtretches of human wit, to deviſe dark and perplexed explications of this doctrine; which human inventions, are ſo far from being clearly taught in ſcripture, that many of them are directly contrary thereto.

OF

OF all the doctrines in revelation, there is the leaſt room here for man's invention: For the moſt elevated ſtrains of genius are utterly loſt in profound darkneſs in attempting to wade beyond the line of revelation, there being nothing we can know of GOD, but what he is pleaſed to reveal of himſelf; which every chriſtian ſhould humbly, diligently, and devoutly learn from his own ſacred word. While the ſtrains of philoſophical criticiſm are buſied in defining a Deity, the mere product of proud imagination; which ſoaring ſpirit in ſome men, that will be wiſe above what is written, will not allow them to ſubmit to the plain intelligible account GOD hath given of himſelf: And what notable diſcoveries do they make, who thus dive into the ſecrets of the moſt high? Why, they *change the glory of the incorruptable* GOD *into an image* of their own fancy, and the *truth of* GOD *into a lie, worſhipping this creature of their own brain, inſtead of the creator, who is* GOD *over all, bleſſed for ever.*

MOST part of men have their minds fixed in certain notions, which in the early periods of their life they were taught by their tutors, or have received through the influence of a party, or out of reſpect to church authority, without examination; theſe they believe as undoubted truths; what is not agreeable thereto, they readily conclude to be falſe: And in every recourſe to the divine word, theſe notions are the rules by which they explain it. Hence it is, that all parties appeal to ſcripture, and pretend to find their own notions there, by forcing it to ſpeak agreeable to the opinions they hold. Thus, received opinions are the ſtandard of the ſenſe of ſcripture, which is diveſted of the honour of being the rule of faith. But as this is viſi-

bly owing to prejudice, in favour of things received from men, which are believed to be unqueſtionably orthodox: If we would be right inquirers after truth, we ſhould come to revelation free and diſengaged,—read and meditate, as under the conduct of an unerring guide, the divine Spirit, without bias and partiality, without regard to human authority, parties, intereſt, or education, waiting upon the LORD for divine aid, who only can open our underſtandings to know the truth revealed in the ſcripture.

WITH reſpect to religion, I chuſe to reſt my faith upon the *divine teſtimony only*, which I am certain will never deceive: But dare not follow *human explications* through the maze of dark, ſubtle, and perplexing diſtinctions, in which ſo many of the contrivers of religious ſyſtems have bewildered themſelves; and much leſs dare I receive doctrines deviſed by ſhort-ſighted mortals as articles of faith. The word of GOD we may give an implicit aſſent unto, being confident that the dictates of heaven are abſolutely unerring: But devices of men in matters of faith, we ſhould approve and receive no further, than upon examination we find them agreeable to the *divine Oracles*.

IF any perſon be inclined to think that I treat thoſe things, which ſo many have received and admired, with too much freedom, (and perhaps what ſome will call contempt) let him conſider, that it is not a matter of divine revelation which is at preſent under conſideration; but an hypotheſis entirely human, only ſupported upon the tottering foundation of pretended antiquity, and the multitude of its votaries. I claim no more in this caſe,

caſe, than the privilege of every chriſtian, which is to examine all ſuch ſyſtems by the word of GOD, and finding any part of them contrary thereto, is at liberty to reject the ſame as any part of his faith.

I AM far from ſaying that the inventors, or maintainers of this ſyſtem, a part of which I am to examine, are chargeable with all the conſequences that have, or may be drawn from it as principles of their's. Therefore, allow me once for all to ſay, that it is not men of any denomination I find fault with, but a HUMAN EXPLICATION of the Trinity, which, tho' rigouroufly impoſed as an article of faith, cannot be reconciled with the ſacred records: And for this reaſon, I ſhall in the following remarks, take the liberty to call it the HUMAN SCHEME.

THERE are ſo many parts of this human ſtructure, ſo many things ſaid to be *natural*, *neceſſary*, and *eſſential* to GOD, without authority from revelation, that 'tis nothing ſtrange for one to be at a loſs where to begin or end in the conſideration of them. As the human ſcheme ſeems to repreſent the characters of the *divine three* in contraſt, I ſhall follow it a little on the plan which the ſtretched imaginations of men have repreſented them in. But muſt firſt obſerve, that the following extract, is not taken from the ſentiments of any ſingle authors, who have wrote upon the ſubject, but from a ſyſtem as much in repute among Proteſtant eſtabliſhed churches, as any I know, in which it is aſſerted,

"THAT it is peculiarly proper to the divine perſonality of the FATHER to be *of none*: That he *alone*

alone of the three divine perſons is the FIRST: That he hath his being and perſonality of *himſelf*, being neither begotten by, nor proceeding *from another*.

BUT, that it is peculiarly proper to the divine perſonality of the SON to be *of another*, viz. the *Father*: That he *alone* is the SECOND: That he hath *not* his being, ſubſiſtence, and perſonality *of himſelf*; but as a *divine perſon* is *begotten* of the Father, by an act of ETERNAL GENERATION.

AND, that it is peculiarly proper to the divine perſonality of the *Holy Ghoſt* to be *of the Father and the Son*,—That he *alone* is the THIRD.—That he hath not his being and perſonality *of himſelf*, but *as a divine perſon proceeds from the Father, and the Son, by an* ETERNAL PROCESSION.

THAT it is the perſonal property of the Father, to beget a Son in his *own nature*.—That it is the perſonal property of the Son, to be begotten in the *Father's nature*.—That it is the perſonal property of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to proceed from both the *Father and the Son*.

THAT *paternity* is natural, and neceſſary to the ſubſiſtence of the Father *as a perſon in God-head*: Or, that he is a FATHER, *as he is* GOD, and that theſe are ſynonimous convertable terms.—That *filiation* is natural, and neceſſary to the ſubſiſtence of the SON, *as a perſon in God-head*: Or, that he is a SON, *as he is* GOD, and that thoſe are ſynonimous convertable terms.—That the name *Holy Ghoſt* is natural, neceſſary, and peculiar to his ſubſiſtence *as a perſon in God-head*: Or, that this character is proper *only* to him, *as he is* GOD, excluſive of the other two perſons in the God-head.

THAT

THAT it is the peculiar property of the Father, to *communicate* the *whole* of the divine eſſence to the *Son*, by which communication he is *a Father in God-head*.—That it is the property of the *Son* to have the *whole* divine eſſence *communicated to him*, by which communication he is *a Son in God-head*. —That it is the property of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to have the *whole* divine eſſence *communicated to him* from the *Father and the Son*, by which communication he is a *perſon in God-head*.

THESE, and many ſuch, are the off-ſpring of human invention, (except a particular or two concerning the Father) for which there is not the leaſt countenance in the word of GOD; which will appear by comparing the particulars of this human ſyſtem, with the ſcripture account of the Trinity, in the former parts of this work: And indeed, theſe are ſoft things, when compared with many other ſubtle philoſophical niceties, which ſome have ſpun from their own brains, and preſented to the world as explications of the Trinity. Out of many, I ſhall only trouble the reader with one ſhort note of an *orthodox* Divine. He ſays, "The *firſt* way of the *divine eſſence acting upon itſelf, produceth the firſt perſon*; the *ſecond* way of *its acting upon itſelf, produceth the ſecond perſon*; and the *third* way *of its acting upon itſelf, produceth the third perſon*." This is a diſcovery indeed! for which we are wholly indebted to the ſchools: But I could not ſay much in favour of his common ſenſe, or knowledge of the ſcriptures, that could admit it as a definition of the GOD he worſhipped.

I HAD no intention of taking any further notice in this place, of the ſentiments of particular Divines

vines on this ſubject, had not the firſt volume of a work, now printing, come in my way, called "An illuſtration of the doctrines of the chriſtian Religion, comprehending a complete Body of Divinity, by the late Reverend and Learned Mr Thomas Boſton, miniſter of the goſpel, at Ettrick." From which it was proper to give the reader this ſhort extract, to ſhew the neceſſity there is of ſetting this ſubject in a ſcriptural light, and of expoſing the abſurdity of men's inventions thereon. It is evident from this extract, which is in the Author's own words, that the moſt admired writers among the ſyſtematics, even in the *preſent age*, do ſtill on this ſubject follow the ſame unſcriptural plan firſt contrived at the council of *Nice*, and further manufactured in the Popiſh ſchools, which the reformers from Popery adopted implicitly into their ſyſtems, and has been generally received as orthodox without examination.

He ſays, p. 189, "I am to explain the terms "*the God-head*, and a *Perſon*. By *the God-head*, is "meant the nature or eſſence of God, even as by "*manhood*, is underſtood the nature of man. A "divine perſon, or a perſon in the God-head, is "the God-head diſtinguiſhed by perſonal proper-"ties: For conſider the God-head, as the *fountain* "or *principle* of the *Deity*, *ſo it is the firſt perſon*; "conſider *it* (the God-head) as *begotten of the Fa-"ther*, it is the *ſecond*; and as *proceeding* from the "Father and the Son, *it* is the *third perſon*.—191. "They are diſtinguiſhed by their order of ſubſiſt-"ing, and their incommunicable perſonal proper-"ties. In reſpect of the order of ſubſiſtence, the "Father is the *firſt* perſon, as the *fountain of the "Deity*, having the foundation of perſonal ſubſiſt-"ence in himſelf; the Son is the *ſecond* perſon, and

" and hath the foundation of perſonal ſubſiſtence " from the Father; and the Holy Ghoſt is the " *third* perſon, as having the foundation of per- " ſonal ſubſiſtence from the Father and the Son.— " 192. This *generation* of the Son and Holy Ghoſt " was from all eternity,—and to deny it, would " be to deny the ſupreme and eternal God-head " of all the glorious perſons.—They are not only " of a like nature or ſubſtance, but one and the " ſame ſubſtance; and if ſo, they are and muſt be " equal in all eſſential perfections.—Each of the " three perſons hath the one whole God-head, or " divine nature.—This myſtery of the Trinity is " ſo interwoven with the whole of religion, that " there can neither be true faith, right worſhip, " or obedience without it.

" Pa. 522. UNLESS *Chriſt* had been the Son " of GOD by eternal generation, he could not have " been our mediator and redeemer, nor could he " have obtained a throne and kingdom as ſuch. " —523. He is the Son of GOD, in a moſt proper " and ſingular manner, viz. by the *Father's com-* " *municating the divine eſſence to him by eternal gene-* " *ration.*—524. The nature of this generation, our " bleſſed LORD himſelf doth explain to us, *John* " v. 26. As the Father hath life in himſelf, ſo " hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himſelf. " Which doth neceſſarily import a communication " of the ſame individual eſſence. For to have life " in himſelf, *was* an eſſential attribute of GOD; " *i. e.* to have life independently, of and from " himſelf, and to be the ſource and fountain of life " to all *creatures*, is a perfection proper to GOD, " inſeparable from his nature, yea, the very ſame " with his eſſence: And therefore, the Father can-

not

" not give it, unleſs he give the eſſence itſelf, which " he cannot give by way of alienation or partici- " pation,—therefore it muſt be by way of communi- " cation. So that the generation of the Son is that " *eternal action* of the Father, whereby he did *com-* " *municate* to the Son the ſame individual eſſence " which he himſelf hath, that the Son might have " it equal with himſelf;—in receiving whereof, " the Son doth no more leſſen or diminiſh the ma- " jeſty or God-head of the Father, than the light " of one candle doth the light of another from " which it is taken. Wherefore the council of " *Nice* ſaid well, that *Chriſt* is GOD of GOD, light " of light, very GOD of very GOD, not proceed- " ing but begotten. Hence, it is clear, that he is " the true GOD, and the moſt high GOD, equal " with the Father." A ſtrange inference from ſuch premiſes!

FEW men, perhaps, have been more popular in the proteſtant churches, than the author of this work. His writings have been generally eſteemed by devout people, and his name reckoned a ſufficient recommendation to what has been printed under that patronage: And no doubt the ſyſtematic doctrine of the Trinity will be received as truth on the ſame account, tho' evidently ridiculous and contradictory in itſelf. It is amazing what weight men have laid upon doctrines, which have not the leaſt countenance from ſcripture!—So important, ſo neceſſary to ſalvation, that if in the leaſt doubted of, the whole of religion is ruined! By this artifice, the bulk of mankind have been frightened into a belief of the dreadful danger of ſo much as inquiring into the truth or falſehood of ſuch doctrines, as have been guarded by ſanctions of ſo ſacred a nature. You might as ſoon perſuade

ſuade many pious people to doubt of their own exiſtence, as that this author, and others of equal repute among them, would lay ſo much weight as he does in this caſe, upon a ſcheme of doctrine which hath no foundation in revelation, reaſon, or common ſenſe. In many reſpects he was juſtly admired; but his authority, nor no man's elſe, can make that a part of the chriſtian religion which GOD has not revealed.

THE ideas which this doctrine convey, ſeem to be more a-kin to the heathen mythology, than the revealed character of GOD in ſcripture: And I cannot help thinking, that ſeveral parts of it are borrowed from that quarter, by the firſt contrivers thereof, who ſtill retained ſome of the notions they had been bred up in, before converted to chriſtianity: And like the reformers from popery, did not get clear of all the prejudices of their firſt education, before they, in the heat of controverſy, compoſed ſyſtems of doctrine, and forms of worſhip, which in many inſtances, are rather what they formerly believed, the idolatries of the heathen, or the ſuperſtitions of popery, than what they afterwards profeſſed, viz. an adherence to revelation, in oppoſition to all the traditions of men. The terms (if there is any ſenſe in them ſo connected) convey ideas only ſuitable to heathen deities, not to the one living and true GOD. To define the eſſence and nature of GOD, by the nature of man,—the communicating and receiving of deity by the lighting of one candle at another,—to tell us the God-head is diſtinguiſhed,—is the fountain of the deity,—is begotten of the father,—proceeds from the father and the ſon, &c. &c. is wholly unintelligible,—ſo confuſed, that no man

can know what is meant by God-head, eſſence, deity, father, ſon, or any other term in the whole of the pretended definition.

I KNOW not which is to be moſt wondered at and lamented, how ſo many great men could aſſume ſuch a prerogative, as to load this doctrine with ſo many unſuitable, unintelligible, and unmeaning diſtinctions: Or, that ſuch multitudes of people have without examination been diſpoſed to receive theſe diſtinctions as undoubted truths, without ſeeing their diſagreement with revelation. It is a pity the one ſhould have ſo much preſumption, and the other ſo void of attention.

IT would be too tedious a taſk to enter minutely into the particular parts of this human ſcheme concerning the Trinity; I ſhall only give ſome hints of the moſt glaring abſurdities and contradictions therein,—anſwer the moſt plauſible arguments in favour of it; and endeavour as I go along, to caſt ſome further light upon the oeconomical names or characters of FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

SECT.

SECT. I.

I SHALL begin with the terms FIRST, SECOND, and THIRD, which are commonly applied to the *divine three*, as characters natural and eſſential to the manner of their ſubſiſtence in Deity: But upon what authority (tradition excepted) I know not. The ſcriptures no where teach that the Father is FIRST in ſubſiſtence in Deity, the SON SECOND, and the *Holy Ghoſt* THIRD. It is written "*there are three, and theſe three are one*," and more we know not; for there is not one expreſſion in the Bible which ſpeaks of the Father, that calls him the FIRST. The *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſaith of himſelf, "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *end*, the *firſt* and the *laſt*." No, ſay the ſupporters of this ſcheme, thou art the SECOND, the perſon of the Father is the FIRST: Is not this teaching him to ſpeak, who gave a mouth to man? Or rather giving the lie to the GOD of truth?

THE only reaſon I ever heard advanced for this part of the ſcheme is, "that the perſons are mentioned in that order in ſcripture." It muſt be granted, that in ſome places the Father is firſt mentioned, the Son next, and the Holy Ghoſt laſt, but not under the terms *firſt*, *ſecond*, and *third*: And if the order of mentioning them ſo in ſome texts, had been to teach us in what manner they ſubſiſted in Deity, then certainly the ſame order would always have been obſerved: But that order is frequently inverted, and in ſome texts the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* is mentioned *firſt*, in others, the *Holy Ghoſt*. (*l*) Therefore it may be juſtly concluded, that

(*l*) 2 Cor. 13, 14. 2 Theſſ. ii. 16, and iii. 5.

that this order of mentioning them in ſome texts, is not to teach us any thing concerning the manner of their ſubſiſtence in Deity.

YET this order of mentioning them may be improved to edification, if conſidered as expreſſive of the order of operation in the divine oeconomy of man's redemption, in which the Father is repreſented as ſuſtaining the majeſty of Deity, chuſing and ſending the Son; and exacting from him ſatisfaction for the ſin of the elect company he was ſent to redeem. The Son in undertaking, and giving that ſatisfaction: The Holy Ghoſt in applying the bleſſings, which *Chriſt*'s ſatisfaction hath made an egreſs for, to the choſen objects of divine love. I ſay, in the order of divine operation, the terms *firſt*, *ſecond*, and *third* may have ſome meaning, but no way infer that they ſubſiſt in this manner in the divine nature.

IT is indeed preſſed as an argument in favour of thoſe terms, "That the order of operation among the divine perſons, is intended to teach the internal order of their ſubſiſtence in Deity." But this is *gratis dictum*, for no ſuch thing is revealed; how then came men by the knowledge of it? As GOD has not revealed the manner of his being and ſubſiſtence, it muſt be the moſt daring preſumption for mortals to pretend to know, or attempt to explain it.

BESIDES, if this propoſition could be granted, then thoſe called *Arians*, have always been right in maintaining that *Chriſt* is an inferior, ſubordinate Deity; for they argue thus: "As the divine perſons are repreſented in going through the work of man's ſalvation, ſo they are in the divine nature;

ture; but *Chriſt* is repreſented in that work to be the Father's ſervant, inferior to, and depending upon the will of the Father: Therefore, he is inferior and ſubordinate to the Father in the divine nature." If the premiſes are good, the conſequence is undeniable. Let the ſupporters of ſuch a propoſition anſwer for giving ſuch an advantage to the adverſaries of the Deity of the SON and SPIRIT, for the ſame conſequence holds with reſpect to both: And it is evident, if the propoſition is maintained, the proper Deity of both muſt be given up.

BUT in fact, the terms *firſt*, *ſecond*, and *third* will admit of no ſenſe, but what import either *priority* and *poſteriority*, or *ſuperiority* and *inferiority*. For I know no other ſenſe the word FIRST will bear as applied to a perſon, but the following, viz. Him that is earlieſt in exiſtence: Him who is before all other in ſome order: Him who is nobleſt in dignity: Or, him who exceeds in excellency. And if the term FIRST be applied to any one in the Trinity, with reſpect to the other two in any of theſe ſenſes, it will neceſſarily conclude againſt their equality, or eternity, if not both. Tho' the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* calls himſelf the FIRST, he is not then comparing himſelf with the Father or Holy Ghoſt, and ſo does not ſuppoſe any of them a SECOND, in that ſenſe in which he calls himſelf the FIRST; for in the ſame ſenſe that he is the FIRST, ſo are the other two; therefore, there can be no SECOND and THIRD, with reſpect to the Deity of the *three who are one*.

THESE terms ſo applied, lead even friends to the doctrine of the Trinity, into low and unſuitable conceptions of one in Deity being *before*, and another

another *after*, which are the natural ideas the terms convey: And at the ſame time, furniſh enemies with arguments againſt the co-eternity and equality or ſameneſs of the *divine three*. Were it not for theſe conſequences, which natively flow from the uſe of the terms ſo applied, I ſhould not heſitate to uſe them, were they intended merely for diſtinctions ſake in ſpeaking of the *divine three*: But yet, I think it is ſafeſt to ſpeak of them under the diſtinguiſhing characters which the divine word hath given them, viz. FATHER, WORD, or SON, and HOLY GHOST, or SPIRIT.

2. AGAIN, I obſerve in general, that the ſupporters of this *ſcheme* allow, "That the three divine perſons are one in the divine eſſence or nature; and that each divine perſon hath the whole of the divine eſſence." Yet in the ſame *ſcheme*, there is not only a diſtinction among the perſons, (which muſt be admitted becauſe the ſcripture calls them THREE) but there is a very *different manner* of ſubſiſting in the ſame eſſence aſſigned to each perſon. Now, if this different manner of ſubſiſting is *internal*, *natural*, or *neceſſary*, as is aſſerted, how then is it poſſible, that the ſame perfections in the ſame reſpect can be in each divine perſon?

IT is a truth, that the divine three exiſt *naturally*, *neceſſarily*, and *eternally*; but there are many things in the *human ſcheme* evidently contrary to this. "That one divine perſon is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; but hath his being and ſubſiſtence of himſelf." All this is true; but are not the other two the ſame? No, ſaith the ſcheme; but the direct contrary." A firſt perſon communicates the divine eſſence, and a ſecond and third receive the eſſence by communication." Can there

there be a more abſolute difference ſuppoſed, than is here affirmed among the *divine three*? What can differ more than *un-originated*, *ſelf-exiſtence*, and *derived*, *communicated exiſtence*? Is it not affirming in the plaineſt terms, that one perſon is ſelf-ſufficient for his own exiſtence and perfections; but the other two are not ſo; but depend upon the communication of them from another? Doth it not degrade them to the level of creatures, whoſe diſtinguiſhing character is, that have they all communicated to them; but cannot ſay they have their being, or any thing they enjoy of themſelves?—Does it not make the *divine three* differ as much as *mutability* and *time* differ from *immutability* and *eternity*? For he who is ſelf-exiſtent, and hath his being and perfections of himſelf, muſt be *eternal* and *immutable*: But on the contrary, he who hath his perſonality and perfections communicated to him, muſt be *mutable*; becauſe he is a dependent being in having that communicated to him, which is neceſſary to his exiſtence, and which he had not originally of himſelf: And as to *eternity*, he can have no claim to it conſiſtent with common ſenſe; for it is a contradiction in terms to ſay, a being is *eternal*, who hath his perſonality and perfections communicated to him from another.

It is the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic betwixt ſupreme Deity and created exiſtence, that the one is ſelf-ſufficient for his own exiſtence and perfections, and the other is not, but depends upon the will of another for the communication of them. The communication of them from one to another, as I hinted juſt now, is a flat contradiction to the eternity and immutability of him to whom they are communicated: For as ſoon as the ſelf-exiſtent being

being did communicate any kind of perfection from himſelf, to another diſtinct from him, *time* commenced with that communication, and he to whom it was made, is declared *mutable*, in as much as that is communicated to him, which he had not originally of himſelf. A derived being, or perſon who is not ſelf-originated, is juſt, in other words, a *dependent creature*. Of this kind muſt our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* be, if his eſſence or perſonality is communicated to him, which is plainly taught in the doctrine of the ſcheme we are conſidering.

To ſuppoſe the term begotten to ſignify that he derived his exiſtence or perſonality (as it is commonly called) from the Father, and in the mean time to ſay he is properly GOD, is directly contrary to the known principles of philoſophy and natural reaſon itſelf, which there is not one article of truth that contradicts; for it ſuppoſes ſomething derivative, and which is not ſelf-exiſtent in Deity; than which there can be nothing more repugnant to the ſelf-evident notion, which reaſon itſelf ſuggeſts to us of true and proper Deity; for if we exclude ſelf-exiſtence and independency out of our conceptions of Deity, (which muſt be the caſe with reſpect to the Deity of *Jeſus Chriſt* upon this plan) we leave nothing whereby it is diſtinguiſhed from created exiſtence: At leaſt, we exclude the chief thing which diſtinguiſhes the one from the other in our notions of them.

By this part of the ſcheme, the proper Deity of the *Lord Jeſus* and the *Holy Ghoſt*, is unavoidably betrayed or given up to the enemies of that doctrine. It is impoſſible to defend it upon ſuch a principle: And not only ſo, but there is the moſt glaring abſurdity and contradiction in it. For, firſt,

firſt, it is affirmed, that theſe ſo very *different* properties are *natural* to the manner in which the *divine three exiſt* in the eſſence; and yet their ſameneſs in the eſſence is aſſerted;—that they are the SAME in ſubſtance, perfection, and glory. Which affirmations are as different as any two propoſitions can be that contradict each other.

THERE can be no argument formed to prove that there are different properties in the divine three, whom revelation declares to be one. As far as we know theſe qualities, properties, and perfections aſcribed to GOD in ſcripture, which appear different to us, may be one and the ſame inthe view of GOD: And we are ſure, that all perfections,—all that is aſcribed to Deity, is aſcribed to each of the divine three. Where then is either foundation for, or propriety in aſcribing ſuch different qualities or properties unknown in revelation to each of them, and then aſſerting in the ſtrongeſt terms, that theſe are as natural and neceſſary to each, as to be GOD. This muſt be ſhocking, when we conſider that among men, theſe qualities which are aſcribed to them admit of degrees; but how is it poſſible, that any thing of the kind can be aſcribed in that manner to the *infinite* JEHOVAH? Who is abſolutely beyond all degrees of compariſon.

THO' the unſpeakable condeſcenſion of GOD is manifeſt, in revealing himſelf under relative characters; and expreſſing what he deſigned we ſhould know of him by diſtinct (and to the carnal conception very different) attributes.—Yet we muſt not conceive, that theſe are in GOD, as qualities are in creatures, in whom power is different from wiſdom, and ſo of all other. In GOD there can-

not be *this* and *that* perfection, or different attritribute, who is a *ſimple*, *uncompounded*, *indiviſible*, *divine Being*.

IT is ſaid, theſe properties are only the *modes* of perſonal ſubſiſtence: 'Tis certain there are three in Deity; but theſe three are one in name, nature, and glory. What ground is there then to believe ſuch a very different manner of ſubſiſtence, as evidently infers different degrees of perſonal perfections? Is not each of them all that GOD is? From whence then have we ground to believe ſuch a difference of the divine nature in one more than in another? By a neceſſary conſequence from the doctrine in the *ſcheme*, the divine nature primarily belongs to one perſon, and muſt be communicated to the other two. This not only introduceth a difference of perſonal glory among the divine three; but in effect ſays, there is none of them (at leaſt the Son and Spirit) properly GOD: And if admitted, it muſt be at the expence of the equality or ſameneſs, and co-eternity of the *three* who are *one*; which can never be ſupported upon the ſuppoſition of theſe ſo very different qualities, or properties mentioned in the human ſcheme, being applied to the divine nature of the *Father*, *Word*, and *Holy Ghoſt*; who are the *ſame* in ſubſtance, *equal* in *name*, *perfections*, and *glory*.

AND as there is no authority in revelation for any ſuch *internal*, *natural*, or *neceſſary* diſtinctions, which are ſo very *different*, and yet *eſſential* to their perſonal ſubſiſtence as are alledged in the ſcheme; I cannot ſee how any man that has no other rule of faith than the ſcriptures, can obtain evidence ſufficient to command his aſſent to ſuch terms ſo applied.

IT

IT is abundantly evident from ſcripture, that with GOD there is neither *prior*, nor *poſterior*; no *ſuperior*, or *inferior*, when we ſpeak of perſon or ſubſiſtence: But it will be difficult to determine, how this can be reconciled with the terms in the ſcheme, as *firſt*, *ſecond*, and *third*, *communicating of the eſſence*, *begetting in the eſſence*, &c. no part of which has the leaſt countenance in revelation; but invented by men, to account for the diſtinction of the divine perſons; while ſuch terms reſtricted to Deity, (if they have any meaning at all ſo applied) deſtroy the proper Deity of each divine perſon. For ſuch terms have not the leaſt analogy to proper Deity, or what is commonly called ſelf-exiſtence, except we were to judge by the rule of contraries, and for *firſt*, *ſecond*, and *third*,—read, *neither firſt*, *ſecond*, nor *third*; for *communicated*, read, *uncommunicated*, &c. which conceptions are more agreeable to any account the Supreme Being hath given of himſelf in the ſacred records, than theſe terms ſo much inſiſted on by the advocates for the divinity of the human ſcheme.

MUST it not be the higheſt preſumption in men to ſay *poſitively* more concerning GOD, than he has been pleaſed to reveal of himſelf, by attempting to give definitions of his nature, or the manner of his exiſtence? A ſubject confeſſed by all, to be infinite and inconceivable. "Surely it muſt be darkening wiſdom with words without knowledge; and talking fooliſhly for GOD." Language itſelf muſt fail, in every attempt to expreſs the ſublimity of it. Would the unmeaning prattle of an infant, be ſuſtained as a clear demonſtration of the abſtruſe problems among aſtronomers? Infinitely leſs is the quinteſſence of all languages under

under heaven capable to demonſtrate this inconceivable divine ſubject: And they certainly diſcredit the truth of its inconceiveableneſs, who begin to inveſtigate or define it in terms of human invention: For that moment any one is capable to conceive it, *he* muſt either be endowed with infinite capacity; or *it* muſt ceaſe to be an infinite myſtery.

THE nature of GOD is not a ſubject of definition; nor can it be apprehended by one adequate conception or notion. All definitions limit the ſubject defined; but GOD is infinite, and cannot be limited by definition. Nor can the compound finite capacity of creatures apprehend the ſimple, infinite nature of GOD. Conſequently to attempt a definition of the nature of GOD, muſt be a daring inſult upon his infinite majeſty,—an attempt to limit him within the bounds of finite comprehenſion,—and ſuppoſes him only a creature like ourſelves. Can any one then imagine it equitable, for any number of men to compoſe an explication of this ſubject, independent on revelation, and impoſe it on the conſciences of their fellow men, by requiring an implicit belief of it as a term of communion in the church of *Chriſt*?

SECT.

SECT. II.

I SHALL now more particularly obſerve ſome things relating to that part of the ſcheme, which concerns the ſonſhip of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. And *firſt*, I obſerve, that the term GOD, when uſed in ſcripture to denote the Supreme Being, generally includes the three ſpecial denominations of his character, by which he diſcovers himſelf to us in the work of our ſalvation; which are theſe of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, unleſs when one of theſe denominations is predicated to point out one of the ſacred three.

THE ſcriptures intimate, that the divine plurality are as neceſſary, according to what they teach us concerning the Being and exiſtence of GOD, as the divine nature which is but *one*: And as the word GOD points out to us, all that is in GOD; then it muſt follow, that one perſon cannot be a cauſe in any ſenſe whatſoever of the perſonality or exiſtence of another: And none of theſe perſons can be called the SON OF GOD, in that ſenſe which it is neceſſary for him to be GOD; ſeeing he muſt be included in the term GOD. This does not hinder him from being SON OF GOD in another ſenſe, viz. the relation he undertook in divine condeſcenſion, to fulfil the purpoſes of JEHOVAH concerning men, which was not abſolutely neceſſary to the Being and exiſtence of GOD.

NOW, where *Chriſt* is called *the Son of God*, if the term *God* be taken for the *Deity*, this will deſtroy the *ſcheme*, for then he will be the Son of the eſſence: But according to it, he is the Son of one

one perſon in the eſſence, by a communication of the eſſence. If this is ſo, it muſt follow, that whereſoever the *Son of God* is mentioned, the term *God* muſt be reſtricted to *one* perſon, viz. the Father, excluſive of the other *two*. Does not this plainly ſuppoſe, that the Father *only* is GOD? That is to ſay, he is GOD in ſuch a ſenſe, as neither of the other two perſons are; which is the very ſoul of that doctrine commonly called *Arianiſm*; for men of that denomination grant the *Word* and *Holy Ghoſt* to be GOD, not in the ſame, but an inferior ſenſe to that in which the Father is GOD; hence, agreeable to this ſcheme, they reaſon thus: "*Chriſt* is the Son of GOD as to his divine perſon; but the term GOD is to be reſtricted to the perſon of the Father: Therefore, he only is GOD in the higheſt ſenſe of the word." Now, if theſe premiſes hold, the inference is good; for if *Chriſt*, as to his *divine perſon*, is the Son of another perſon in Deity, he cannot be GOD in the ſame ſenſe *as a* SON, that the other who begat his *divine perſon* is *as a Father*.

THUS it is evident, that the *Arian* doctrine by neceſſary conſequence is countenanced in the pretended *orthodox ſcheme*: But, I hope the ſhame of thus yielding the glorious cauſe of *Chriſt*'s proper divinity, by ſuch incoherent notions ſo far from ſcripture, and beyond the ſphere of human conception, as not to be made either good divinity or good ſenſe, will rouſe the lovers of his honour to the vindication of it from revelation *itſelf*, where it is abundantly evident to every unprejudiced inquirer.

2. IT is maintained in the ſcheme, that it is peculiarly proper to the *Lord Jeſus*, to have his divine

vine perſonality *from another*. If this is ſo, it muſt be either from the divine *eſſence*, or from the *Perſon* of the *Father*: If the former, then he is the Son of the *eſſence*, and is no more from the Father, than the Father is from him: And if the divine eſſence is the Father of our *Lord Jeſus*, then he is as much the Son of himſelf, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, as of the Father: Since the eſſence or divine nature is common to all the three. But tho' this is allowed in one part of the ſcheme, it cannot be admitted conſiſtent with *this* part of it; for here the perſonality of the Son is limited to the communication of the eſſence from the Father, which not only contradicts ſome other parts of it, but manifeſtly veſts a ſupremacy in the Father, and appropriates a derived perſonality to the Son, which deſtroys his proper Deity.

IT cannot be denied, that every *effect* muſt in point of time be poſterior or after its cauſe. Conſequently every *effect* muſt have a beginning. *Filiation* or ſonſhip is an *effect*, and therefore muſt have had a beginning. Now, if one in Deity be naturally and neceſſarily a Son, it will as neceſſarily follow that his nature is *derived*; ſince that is affirmed to be *natural* to him which is an *effect*, and muſt be *derived*. Every kind of *derivation* ſuppoſeth the beginning of the thing *derived*: But *generation*, (according to all the ideas we can have of *generation*) is one kind of *derivation*, and muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe a beginning of that which is generated. Conſequently to put *eternal* to *generation* with reference to time *paſt*, is a direct contradiction, and is the ſame as if we ſhould ſay, the *beginningleſs beginning* of any thing; which is no more a contradiction in terms than *eternal generation* is.

If the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* had the divine nature communicated to him,—if he is naturally and neceſſarily a Son,—and was generated as a divine perſon, he muſt be derived, as he is not without an external cauſe of exiſtence, and ſo cannot be ſelf-exiſtent: And if he is not without an external cauſe of exiſtence, he muſt have had a beginning, —is poſterior to ſome other being, and conſequently is not eternal *à parte ante*.

There are but two ways any perſon can exiſt; either naturally, neceſſarily, and independently, which we call ſelf-exiſtence: Or, by ſome external cauſe, at the pleaſure and will of another. It is an abſolute truth that the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* ſelf-exiſts, as I proved formerly. But a communicated perſonality, is the direct oppoſite of neceſſary exiſtence: Hence, there is no tolerable ſenſe the terms in the ſcheme will bear, but that the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* is a derived Being, who exiſts at the pleaſure of God his Father; which is the moſt that ever any *Arian* did plead for.

3. The argument mentioned, pa. 174, in favour of *Chriſt*'s oeconomical ſonſhip, effectually deſtroys the notion of ſonſhip by an eternal generation. All the fundamental articles of faith neceſſary to ſalvation, are plain, familiar, eaſy to be underſtood, and clearly revealed in the word of God; but the belief of *Chriſt* being the Son of God, is made neceſſary to ſalvation: Therefore, it muſt be eaſy to be underſtood, and clearly revealed in the word of God. Now, to take his ſonſhip for an eternal generation of the divine perſon of the *Lord Jeſus*, by the perſon of the Father, is what no man ever profeſſed to underſtand any thing about: But even by all the ſupporters thereof, it is acknowledged to be

be an ineffable, unconceivable myſtery: Which, nevertheleſs, would not make it falſe, was it matter of divine revelation. Had GOD made known the truth of it, we were then bound to believe it, tho' we could not define the manner of it. But for my own part, I freely confeſs, after many years ſearch, I never could find, and I ſuppoſe it would puzzle the whole world to find, the leaſt hint of any eternal generation in all the word of GOD. There is not one text, where the *Lord Jeſus* is called the ETERNAL *Son of God*, or that he was begotten from *eternity*. That he is the ETERNAL GOD, is manifeſt from abundance of ſcriptures; but that he is an *eternal Son*, the divine Oracles no where inſinuate. *Eternal generation* is merely the product of man's invention; for it cannot be gathered from revelation by the remoteſt conſequence.

'TIS true the doctrine of the Trinity,—the union of the nature of GOD and man, in the perſon of *Emmanuel*,—and the union of the Saints with *Chriſt*, commonly called by the *ſyſtematics*, the *hypoſtatic*, and *myſtical* unions, are myſteries as to the manner of them, yet they are to be believed; but why? Not for their myſteriouſneſs, but becauſe it is clearly revealed in the ſacred pages that they are; and tho' the manner of them remains a ſecret to mortals; yet the teſtimony of the LORD of hoſts, is ſufficient warrant for our believing the truth of them. There is nothing can be called a *myſtery* that is *revealed* in any text of ſcripture. A *revealed myſtery* is no better ſenſe than *eternal generation*. Had we one text for the eternal ſonſhip of *Chriſt*, we durſt not heſitate a moment in receiving it as an article of faith, tho' we did not underſtand the manner of his being begotten. We are bound to believe revealed truths on the veracity of the un-

erring Spirit of GOD, without daring to bring them to the bar of our viciated reaſon, to judge of their *truth*, by what we can can learn of the *manner* of them.

IF *eternal generation* be a truth, it requires expreſs revelation to ſupport it; nothing ſhort of a divine diſcovery could poſſibly make it known: Without this, every thing concerning the Trinity is beyond the reach of the moſt intelligent to inveſtigate by reaſoning and implication. Here created capacities are limited, and at their *neplus ultra*. This is one glory of divine revelation, that it diſcovers things otherwiſe unſearchable. But where is that text which teacheth us eternal ſonſhip? Or, that the divine perſon of the *Lord Jeſus* was begotten by *an act of eternal generation?* Now as this doctrine is not taught in the word of GOD, and even contrary to reaſon and common ſenſe; muſt it not be adulterating the precious truths of GOD,—abuſing the reaſon of mankind,—and doing violence to the rights of their conſciences, who will not be ruled in matters of faith by the dictates of men, to preſs upon them ſuch a notion as a fundamental article of the chriſtian faith?

4. I would obſerve, that there is nothing can be more evident, if the ſcope of the New Teſtament is conſidered, than that this was the great queſtion in that period: Whether *Jeſus Chriſt* was the promiſed, expected *Meſſiah*, the great Saviour propheſied of in the Old Teſtament? This was the criterion of the chriſtian religion, the teſt of diſcipleſhip, and term of communion in the church; the believing and confeſſing this, gave a title to the chriſtian character and communion. The moſt prejudiced in favour of any ſcheme, cannot well deny this:

this: And to recount the evidence particularly, would be to tranſcribe more than half of the New Teſtament.

OUR Saviour himſelf calls in the teſtimony of his Father, his own preaching and miracles, the Old Teſtament Prophets, with the voice of his forerunner, *John the Baptiſt*, to confirm this truth. The joint teſtimony of the diſciples, with thoſe converted during *Chriſt*'s abode here, eſpecially the *Samaritan* woman, with her fellow citizens, are manifeſt to this purpoſe. The method which the Apoſtles took to inſtruct the infant churches, proves this point. As a ſpecimen, the reader may conſult *Peter*'s ſermons, recorded in the 2d, 3d, and 10th ch. of the Acts, and *Paul*'s in the 17th. Theſe, with many other places in the Acts and Epiſtles, put the matter paſt doubt to the meaneſt capacity. To which might be added, the manner of baptiſing proſelytes to the chriſtian religion, eſpecially from among the *Jews*, which was always in the name of JESUS CHRIST.

NOW, tho' both the Apoſtles and other converts freely and very frequently confeſſed their faith in the *Son of God*, (which is proved above to be the ſame with believing in *Jeſus Chriſt*, in New Teſtament language) yet, it is ſtrange, that neither *Chriſt*, his Apoſtles, nor any other, whoſe ſouls were filled with the Spirit and grace of GOD, ever gave the leaſt hint of *eternal generation:* Or, that the divine perſon of *Chriſt* was begotten; and that he had the *divine nature communicated to him from the Father*, &c. Is not the doctrines of *Chriſt*, and the Apoſtles, ſufficient ground for our faith, without ſo many different ideas as the wiſdom of men have preſumptuouſly added thereto?

THOUGH

THOUGH the divinity of *Chriſt* ſhines clearly in every page of the New Teſtament, and muſt be included in his character as the all-ſufficient Saviour, by every one that believeth in him; yet, the wiſdom of GOD directed the Apoſtles not to break in upon the prejudiced *Jews*, and blinded *Gentiles*, with the blaze of the Deity of *Chriſt:* But to lead them by degrees from the knowledge of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, the ſon of man, to the knowledge of *Jeſus* the *Meſſiah*, the *Son of God*, their *Prophet*, *Prieſt*, and *King:* From the revelation of *Chriſt*, the *Saviour*, to the revelation of *Chriſt*, the *true God* and eternal life: From the diſcovery of the preſence of GOD with him, as ſent for the ſalvation of men, to the doctrine of himſelf, being the true and eternal GOD. Thus *they* taught, and thus *they* believed; without limiting his character as a Son to his pure Deity; much leſs to an eternal generation, being begotten as he is a divine perſon, or having his divine nature communicated to him.

ETERNAL generations is an invention of men, who pretend to be ambaſſadors of *Chriſt*, that they may rank with the Apoſtles; and not content with this, they will aſſume the power of dictating articles of faith, and introducing *their myſteries* into religion, beſides the myſteries and counſel of GOD, which the Apoſtle had in commiſſion, to open up and declare to the churches. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that the Apoſtles were (*a*) *ſtewards* of the myſteries of GOD: And in a very ſolemn manner declares to the elders of the church of *Epheſus*, (*b*) "That he had kept back nothing that was profitable to them—But had declared to them ALL the counſel of

(*a*) 1 Cor. iv. 1. (*b*) Acts xx. 20, 27.

of GOD." Now, as the Apoſtle never mentions *eternal generation*, nor any thing like it, in his epiſtles to thoſe or any other of the churches, it muſt be concluded by every one who is diſpoſed to believe the Apoſtle, that *eternal generation* is none of the *myſteries of God*,—no part of *his counſel* made known to men,—nor any way *profitable* to them. The making it an article of faith, muſt therefore be a proud attempt to *add* to the counſel of GOD, —an impeachment of the Apoſtles, with the crimes of *faſehood* and *unfaithfulneſs*, in affirming that they had declared *all* the counſel of GOD, while they kept back that momentous point *eternal generation*. Their conduct is more than a bare inſinuation, that the ſcriptures are ſufficient for the purpoſes which the Apoſtles affirm they are.—(*c*) "All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of GOD, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for *reproof*, for *correction*, for *inſtruction*, in righteouſneſs,—*able* to make the man of GOD *perfect*,—*wiſe to ſalvation*,—and *thoroughly furniſhed* unto *all good works*."

5. WE may further obſerve, that in theſe texts where *Chriſt* is called a SON, we cannot ſuppoſe his Deity abſtractedly is, or can be deſigned, according to the juſt and moſt natural interpretation of the texts. We ſhall mention only a few for example, and hint the inconſiſtency of applying the term SON, expreſſed or underſtood in them, to the pure Deity of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*.

He ſays,—(*d*) "As the Father gave me commandment, even ſo I do." To ſuppoſe one in the divine plurality commanding, another obeying, without relation to their oeconomical characters, is

(*c*) 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17. (*d*) John xiv. 31.

is wholly inconſiſtent with their equality or ſameneſs and ſelf-exiſtence; as the will, power, and glory of the *three* are *one* in the ſame nature.

THE *will* of the ſacred *three* in Deity is *one*; but we often find the SON as ſuch, mentioning *his will* as diſtinct from that of the Father.—(*e*) "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: Nevertheleſs, not *my will*, but *thine* be done. I ſeek not *mine own will*, but the *will* of the *Father* who hath ſent me." But the learned call this diſtinct will of *Chriſt* his *human will*, or the will of his *human nature* ONLY. This is diſtinguiſhing rather too nicely, and if it is juſt, then he ſuſtained the character of our redeemer, as he was *man* ONLY. All things he ſays of himſelf, or are ſaid of him, which imply ſubordination and ſubjection to the Father, are meant of his human nature ONLY. What then becomes of the value of his obedience and death,—of man's redemption,—or in ſhort of the chriſtian religion!

BUT there is a particular conſequence inſeparable from this notion of *Chriſt*'s *human will*, which the profeſſed orthodox will perhaps diſlike as much as any, tho' far from having the ſame danger attending it. It cannot be denied, that *Chriſt* brought this diſtinct will he ſo often mentions from heaven with him; for he ſays,—(*f*) "I came down from heaven, not to do mine *own will*, but the *will* of him that *ſent me*." Now, if this be the will of his human nature ONLY, then the *pre-exiſtence* of his human ſoul, before he was manifeſted in the fleſh, muſt be granted. There is no avoiding this conſequence, without the aſſiſtance

(*e*) Luke xxii. 42. John v. 30. (*f*) John vi. 38.

ance of ſome bold figure to explain thoſe texts, which is the common refuge of the learned in caſes of ſuch diſtreſs. For my own part, I ſee no danger in admitting this laſt conſequence; tho' I think the plain meaning of the texts, points out *Chriſt* in his oeconomical character, in which he was ſent the Son of GOD, and Saviour of the world; in that reſpect he may have a diſtinct will from the Father.

(*g*) "FATHER, glorify me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world began." To confine the ſonſhip implied here to the divine perſon of *Chriſt*, would make one divine perſon pray to another, and that for the reſtoration of a glory which the ſame divine perſon once had, and is at that time diveſted of, all which is impoſſible in pure Deity; for,—(*h*) "He is without variableneſs, or ſhadow of turning."

(*i*) "THE *Father* loveth the *Son*, and hath given all things into his hand." *As a Son*, he receives all things from the Father, but *as he is God*, he can receive nothing; he hath an original right to every thing: Therefore, he is not a SON, as he is GOD.

WHEN the *Centurion*, and thoſe who attended *Chriſt* on the croſs, beheld the awful ſcene,—(*k*) "They ſaid, truly this was the *Son of God*." Did they here mean they ſaw the eternal inviſible GOD hanging dead upon the croſs? Neither their words, nor the circumſtances of the affair will admit of ſuch a ſenſe. By a deduction of what they ſaw of

(*g*) John xvii. 5. (*h*) Ja. i. 17. (*i*) John iii. 35. (*k*) Matt. xxvii. 54.

of the man upon the croſs, and the interpoſition of divine providence in ſo ſtriking a manner on his behalf, they apprehended a relation betwixt him and GOD; that he was a favourite of heaven: And if we conſider how the other Evangeliſts record this matter, it will be evident, that the meaning muſt be as above; and by no means, that they thought the *Son* they ſpoke of was GOD. *Mark* ſays,—(*l*) "When the *Centurion* ſaw that *he cried out*, and *gave up the Ghoſt*, he ſaid, truly this *man* was the *Son of God*." And *Luke* ſays,—(*m*) "Now when the *Centurion* ſaw what was done, *he glorified God*, ſaying, certainly this was a *righteous man*."

IT is very plain the Evangeliſts had no ſuch notion of the *Centurion*'s words, as many divines ſince have had, who would perſuade the world, that they are a notable proof that *Chriſt* is *God*, as he is a *Son*: Whereas the direct contrary is not obſcurely intimated, if we will admit the Evangeliſt *Luke* to interpret what is meant by the *Son of God* in the other two Evangeliſts. It is admirable, what pitiful ſhifts the advocates for that opinion have fled to. One of them on this ſubject, finds he cannot reconcile the Evangeliſts to his cauſe, and rather than yield to them, he boldly contradicts them, by alledging "that what ſome of them have ſaid, is not the language of the *Centurion*, but of thoſe who were with him," though all the three mention the *Centurion* particularly: And tho' it were even granted againſt the Evangeliſts, it would not in the leaſt help that tottering cauſe.

I SHALL only mention one text more, as I think the matter is abundantly clear.—(*n*) "When all things

(*l*) Mark xv. 39. (*m*) Luke xxiii. 47. (*n*) 1 Cor. xv. 28.

things ſhall be ſubdued unto him (*Chriſt*); then ſhall the *Son* alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that GOD may be all in all." To take ſonſhip here for the divine nature of our *Lord Jeſus*, muſt infer, that he has no original right to the things which are put under him; for this is ſaid to be done by another: But as he is GOD, he has the ſame underived claim to all things with the Father; if it be owned that he is of the ſame nature, power, and glory. 'Tis here ſaid, "Then ſhall the SON *himſelf* be ſubject," (according to our tranſlation of the text)—Which plainly ſhews, that as a SON he is ſubject; but as to his Deity, he is (*o*) "GOD over all, bleſſed for ever." Subjection is proper to his character as a SON; but ſovereign and abſolute dominion is natural to him as he is GOD: Therefore, as he is GOD, he cannot be a SON.

MANY more texts might be brought in here, to ſhew the weakneſs of confining the ſonſhip of *Chriſt* to his pure Deity, or an act of eternal generation, whereby his divine perſon was begotten by the Father; the abſurdity of which is evident from every text in the ſacred records, that mention any thing concerning him as a SON. The reader may join theſe few with others mentioned, at p. 159, as equally clear in favour of oeconomical ſonſhip, which will be ſtill more conſpicuous from the conſideration of theſe texts, commonly advanced to prove that kind of ſonſhip I am here diſclaiming: But before I proceed to theſe, I ſhall obſerve further here,

6. THAT it is a ſufficient reaſon to reject any human ſcheme introduced into religion, which hath

(*o*) Rom. ix. 5.

not the ſtamp of divine authority, when it is uſed with more advantage by adverſaries againſt the truth; than it can be by friends in defence thereof. What countenance thoſe of the *Arian* perſuaſion have in this ſcheme, is evident from the advantage they have taken from it to diſhonour the *Lord* of life. To this is owing their ſucceſs, ſince ſome of their modern advocates have refined the *Arian* hypotheſis, by grafting on a ſtock ſo near of kin to this ſcheme, that they take occaſion from it to inſult the faith of chriſtians, and reproach the doctrine of the Deity of our *Lord Jeſus*, as if it had no better arguments to ſupport it.

THE affinity betwixt this ſcheme and the *Arian* hypotheſis, ſhews it to be a very unneceſſary oppoſition which the *Arians* have maintained for many years againſt it, which is only founded on the different ideas the contending parties affix to the ſame words. For there is very little in what is called the orthodox explanation of the Trinity, to hinder the ſtricteſt *Arian* in the world to ſubſcribe it. The words uſed in it, cannot by the unprejudiced be underſtood in any other ſenſe than what the *Arians* contend for: And perhaps the moſt intelligent among them, would find ſome difficulty to expreſs their own ſentiments in ſtronger terms than the pretended orthodox have done for them, which incoherent, unſcriptural notions, have contributed more to the growth of *Arianiſm*, than all other means beſides.

THERE are indeed ſome phraſes thruſt into the ſcheme, merely in oppoſition to the *Arians*, without any regard to ſcripture, or their connection and agreement with the other parts of it; which only make the whole appear the more inconſiſtent,

and

and tend to confirm the enemies to the Deity of the *Lord Jeſus* and the *Holy Ghoſt*, in their oppoſition to a truth maintained in a manner ſo void of ſcripture ideas, and ſo contradictory in itſelf, as to render the whole ſcheme unintelligible to any *impartial inquirer*.

In ſuch a mind it begets a mighty prejudice againſt the belief of the Deity of *Chriſt*, when he finds it maintained that he is a Son, as he is God :—That his *divine perſonality* is *begotten* :—That his *Deity depends* upon his *Sonſhip* :—That his *divine nature* is *communicated to him*. Which is all of a kind; not a word of truth in the whole; and amounts to no more than that his Deity depends upon his derived, dependent character. For the notion of a *Son* in all languages among mankind, imports derivation and dependence; and the ſcheme inſinuates in the ſtrongeſt terms, that *Chriſt*'s divinity is of this kind, ſince he receives it by communication. Whereas the notion of proper Deity imports independence, inorigination, and ſelf-exiſtence, which to the impartial inquirer, carries a contradiction in the very terms: And there is the greateſt probability, if ſuch a perſon had no other means of learning the Deity of *Chriſt*, than by this human ſcheme of doctrine, he would either prove an *Arian*, or conclude it beyond his conceptions, from the contradictions ſo manifeſt in every part of it: And that it may appear, I do not ſay this out of any ill-grounded prejudice againſt this *ſcheme*, I ſhall conclude the reflections in this ſection, with a ſhort account of a few of the *ſelf-evident contradictions* therein.

The firſt leading contradiction, which I take to be the foundation of all others, is, That tho' 'tis acknow-

acknowledged, that revelation only teacheth us the true knowledge of GOD: That nothing is matter of divine faith, but what hath a divine teſtimony: That we are to believe nothing concerning the Trinity, but what is clearly revealed in ſcripture: That GOD alone is author of all the knowledge we can have of himſelf; and that this is contained in his word of revelation. Theſe propoſitions are ſtrictly true, and confeſſed to be ſo by the profeſſed orthodox, who, yet, are fond of a ſcheme in which there are many things ſaid of GOD not revealed by him, but deviſed, and impoſed by men; who take it upon them to correct the divine eloquence, as if he who holds the fabric of nature in his hand, did not know how to accommodate his doctrines to the capacities of his creatures: And will teach him to ſpeak who gave a mouth to man.

BUT what notable diſcovery do *they* make, who are thus wiſe above what is written, in their additions to the divine Oracles? Why, they are ſo honeſt as to tell us, that the words they uſe, are not to be taken in any ſenſe that mankind is capable of underſtanding them in. Now, what preſumption is this, for mortals to clothe divine truth with modes of expreſſion which they themſelves are ignorant of, and know not how they are applicable to the ſubject which they pretend to explain by them! This is juſt to form a ſcheme, and then tell the world it muſt be believed: But the words it is compoſed of, are void of ſenſe and meaning when ſo applied! How diſmal had the caſe of mankind been, had GOD dealt thus in inditing his ſacred revelation?——

BUT

BUT further, they tell us that the *nature of God* is an *ineffable myſtery*, beyond the comprehenſion of all creatures: Yet in this ſcheme, there is a *demonſtration* of it, a *definition* of the *internal modes* of ſubſiſtence of all the perſons in Deity.

HERE we are alſo taught, that the divine perſon of the FATHER is FIRST, the SON SECOND, and the HOLY GHOST THIRD:—Yet none of the perſons are either AFORE or AFTER another.——— That the Father *communicates* the *whole* of his *eſſence* to the Son, and Holy Ghoſt:—Yet, it is impoſſible that the divine eſſence can be *communicated* at all, either in *whole*, or in part: For GOD is a *ſimple*, *infinite*, *indiviſible Being*.———He *communicates* his whole ESSENCE:—Yet, his eſſence is HIMSELF; his very indiviſible ſelf: So that to communicate his ESSENCE, muſt be to communicate or give HIMSELF.

—— HE communicates his eſſence, whereby he BECOMES A FATHER:—Yet was always the SAME.—By the communication of the eſſence to another, HE BECOMES A SON:—Yet from all eternity the SAME. The one perſon *communicates*; the other *receives* by *commmunication* the divine eſſence: Yet all the perſons are the *ſame* in the eſſence; and impoſſible that there can be any *change* in either *perſons* or *eſſence*.

THOSE among the ſupporters of the ſcheme who ſpeak plainly, ſay, that *Chriſt* in *becoming a Son*, *became God*: But others reckon themſelves more modeſt in ſaying, that his *divine perſon was begotten*. But in fact, the laſt ſentiment is the ſame with the other, which is plain from the following ſhort argument. As *Chriſt* is a divine perſon, he

is

is GOD; but as a divine perſon, he is begotten: Therefore, he is begotten, as he is GOD. This is the language of the ſcheme, which compared with other ſentiments in the ſame well contrived ſyſtem, is pregnant with contradictions.

—— CHRIST, by being begotten a Son, he *becomes God*:—Yet he is GOD over all, *eternally* the *ſame* with the *Father*.———The Son as a diſtinct perſon thus generated, is GOD OF GOD:—(that muſt be, one would think, *another God* diſtinct from the *God* he is *of*) Yet, there is but ONE GOD.

—— THE *divine perſon* of *Chriſt* was begotten:—Yet, not his *Deity* begotten.———*Jeſus Chriſt* is the *Son of God*, according to his *divine nature*:—Yet, the *divine nature* of the *Son*, is no more begotten, than the *divine nature* of the *Father*.——— One of the perſons is begotten, in the divine *nature* of *another perſon*, and not begotten in his *own nature*:—Yet, the divine *nature* is but *one*, and *common* to all the perſons.

—— JESUS CHRIST is the *Son of God* by eternal generation of the SUBSTANCE of the FATHER:—Yet, he is not the *Son* of the ESSENCE; nor is the FATHER'S SUBSTANCE the matter out of which he is begotten.———The *perſons* are begotten in the eſſence:—Yet, but *one* perſon is ſaid to be begotten.

—— THE Son is a SECOND perſon in Deity, the Holy Ghoſt a THIRD:—The Son was *begotten* in the FATHER'S eſſence,—*received* his perſonal ſubſiſtence by *generation* and *communication*; and the Holy Ghoſt, by *proceſſion* and *communication* from the *Father* and the *Son*:—Yet all the perſons in

in Deity *are*, and *will be*, what they *always were*, *eternally*, *unchangeably the ſame*.

—— THE Father is *of none*; he hath the eſſence *of himſelf*; the Son is *from* the *Father's eſſence*; and the Holy Ghoſt *from both* :—Yet, no *eſſential* difference among the perſons; they are the *ſame* in *ſubſtance* or *eſſence*; no *ſuperior* or *inferior*; no *prior* or *poſterior*.

—— THE divine *perſonalities* of the *Son* and *Holy Ghoſt*, are *derived* by *communication*; the one by *generation*, the other by *proceſſion* :—Yet all the perſons in Deity are ſelf-exiſtent. (All that is in Deity muſt neceſſarily and eternally exiſt.)

THE Son is all that the Father is:—Yet, he is not of himſelf, which the Father is.—Not unbegotten, which the Father is.—The Son can do all that the Father does :—Yet cannot beget a Son in his own nature, which the Father does. There is no end of abſurdities here; however, I ſhall only mention one more.——

JESUS CHRIST was a Son previous to, or before he was a mediator :—Yet *Jeſus Chriſt* was anointed as mediator from all eternity.

MANY ſuch contradictions might be collected from this human ſyſtem; and ſtill more from the works of ſuch as have appeared in defence of it. Theſe few are ſufficient to ſhew how contrary it is to itſelf, and alſo to the revelation GOD hath given us. Self-contradiction is a ſure evidence of a falſe hypotheſis, whether philoſophical or divine. Such are the improvements made upon the doctrine of the

Trinity, by the profound ſtretches of their wit, who have been prying into this ſacred doctrine beyond what is revealed by GOD, who knows beſt what meaſure of knowledge therein was neceſſary for our imperfect ſtate.

SUCH philoſophical demonſtrations of this doctrine are the effects of proud, corrupt nature: And a confounding of reaſon by a miſapplication of it. Yet, theſe human inventions are fathered upon divine revelation; which is charging the GOD of conſummate wiſdom with folly,—and a moſt notorious reproach upon the chriſtian religion in general.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Arguments in favour of the natural and neceſſary Son-ſhip of Chriſt, or, what is commonly called eternal generation, conſidered.

AFTER all, it is but fair to give an impartial hearing to what the advocates for this ſcheme, which they pretend is of ſuch conſequence, have advanced in defence of it: And as they ſometimes endeavour to prove it by general propoſitions, and ſometimes from ſcripture texts, I ſhall conſider theſe ſeparately, leſt I ſhould do their cauſe injuſtice, by allowing any evidence they produce for it to eſcape unnoticed.

FIRST, it is alledged, "That if the *ſon of man* denotes the human nature of *Chriſt*, or that he is really man; ſo the name *Son of God* muſt ſignify his divine nature, or that he is truly and properly GOD."

Anſ. THE caſe differs very widely; for the name *Son of man* is never applied to any perſon who is not true and real man; but the name *Son of God* is often applied to both Angels and men, yet they are not truly and properly GOD. So that the argument proves nothing to the purpoſe for which it is brought; and only infers, that as his being called *the ſon of man*, ſhews him to be the chief of the ſons of men; ſo his being called *Son of God*, points him out to be the moſt eminent of all who are ſo called, both in character and office. Beſides, I know not one text where he is called *ſon of man*, to ſhew that he is real man, or where the ſenſe is to be reſtricted to his human nature without including

cluding his office; * nor do I know one where he is called *Son of God*, to denote his pure Deity: And as he is called *ſon of man*, without including the idea of his human nature being BEGOTTEN BY MAN, why may he not be called *Son of God*, without the conſideration of his divine perſon being BEGOTTEN BY GOD?

ANOTHER argument is, "That the word *Son* among men, properly ſignifies one of the ſame nature with the Father; therefore *Son of God*, when applied to *Chriſt*, muſt ſignify one of the ſame nature with GOD the Father.

Anſ. THE word *Son* among men has ſeveral ideas; as, derivation from the Father, ſubordination, or inferior relation to the father;—Likeneſs to, or imitation of the father;—A Being of the ſame ſpecies or kind with the father;—An individual being diſtinct from the father. There are none of theſe ideas can with propriety be applied to the divine perſon of *Chriſt* in relation of nature with the Father: But ſeveral of them may be applied to him in his ſubordinate character, as *Meſſiah*, his being appointed and ſent by the Father, his being vicegerant in the kingdom, &c. Beſides, Angels and men are called *Sons of God*, (*p*) yea, men are ſaid to be begotten of GOD, (*q*) yet neither of theſe are of the ſame nature with GOD their Father in that ſenſe they would have *Chriſt*, becauſe he is called the *Son of God*; nor is it poſſible it can be ſo.

2. WHERE *Son* among men denotes ſameneſs of nature, it ſignifies the ſame *ſpecific nature*

(*p*) Job xxxviii. 7. Hoſ. i. 10. (*q*) Phil. ii. 15. 1 John iii. 1, 2, and v. 1.

* See p. 141. for the ſenſe of the term *ſon of man* as applied to *Chriſt*.

ture, or one of the ſame kind and ſpecies; but never means the ſame *individual nature*. It conſtantly denotes a *diſtinct*, *individual being*. So if the parallel in the argument muſt be ſupported, 'tis time for chriſtians to look to the neceſſary conſequence thereof, *i. e.* that *Chriſt* in his divine perſon is a *diſtinct*, *individual being*, of the ſame kind with the Father, which neceſſarily makes them TWO GODS.

3. THERE is alſo another conſequence that attends this argument if it hold, which I hope the friends of *Chriſt*'s proper Deity will be very unwilling to grant, viz. As the term *Son*, in all languages among mankind, carries in it the idea of *derivation* and *dependence*; to inſiſt on a parallel here, gives the cauſe wholly to the *Arians*; who ſay, that as he is GOD, he is a *derived*, *dependent Being*.

THE philoſophical gentlemen, who preſume to account for the manner of the exiſtence of GOD, having got eternal generation and proceſſion into their ſcheme, are ſo confident of their orthodoxy on that head, that one of them tells us, "There "is one conſideration, which, when thoroughly "purſued, will obviate all objections againſt it,— "that is, that as time is a mode of all creature "exiſtence, ſo eternity is a mode of uncreated "exiſtence."

Anſ. THE more I purſue this propoſition, the more I find it an imaginary phantom. Some modes are very precarious and uncertain, ſome are invariable: but it will perhaps ſuit the philoſopher better to diſtinguiſh them into accidental, and eſſential,—or into accidents and qualities. Now, if eternity

nity is a mode in the ſame ſenſe to the Almighty, that time is to creatures, then it is merely accidental to him; for creatures, as Angels and men, ſhall exiſt when there is no time, when days, years, and all manner of duration by meaſure ſhall come to an end: And as time will ceaſe to be a mode of creature exiſtence, being thus accidental, if eternity be the ſame to uncreated exiſtence, (which muſt be the ſenſe of the propoſition, if it has any) then the Almighty will (at leaſt may) ceaſe to exiſt, when creatures enter upon an endleſs ſtage of exiſtence, and time is no more a mode of exiſtence to them.

BUT if we conſider time and eternity as *eſſential* modes of human and divine exiſtence, the natural conſequence is, that man will never get out of time; and eternity to them will never commence. Thus, if we conſider theſe modes as *accidental*, the propoſition lands us in *Atheiſm*; and if *eſſential*, we muſt give up *immortality*.

AGAIN, if a mode be conſidered under the notion of an *accident*, then it cannot with any propriety be applied to the Deity; for there is nothing accidental in GOD, or to him: And if it is conſidered as a *quality*, then it ſuppoſes ſome *ſubſtratum*, and ſo we are juſt as far from the nature in which it adheres as we were.

IN the ſenſe this philoſopher ſeems to underſtand modes, time is a mode of preſent exiſtence to both GOD and man; for both exiſt in time; and eternity muſt be a mode of human exiſtence, in as much as it ſhall exiſt in eternity, when time is no more. So that the propoſition proves nothing to the purpoſe for which it was brought: And take it

it even in its utmoſt latitude, the terms have no regard to the *nature* of either GOD or man abſtractedly conſidered. In time and eternity beings exiſt, and if eternity be a mode of the divine *nature*, as time is of the human, then it is no more than continual exiſtence. Eternity is not a property of *nature*, more than *time* is of the human *nature*.

BUT the diſpute is not at all concerning the meaſure of duration; but the internal operations of the divine nature, which are two very different things. Tho' we ſhould grant that eternity is a mode of divine exiſtence, will it follow, that generation and proceſſion are other two modes of it? Is there any connection neceſſary betwixt theſe ideas? Tho' the ſcriptures affirm that GOD is eternal, they do not ſay he begat a Son from eternity. When eternity is called a mode of divine exiſtence, it ſtill ſuppoſes a nature that exiſts, and the queſtion is not about modes, but operations of the divine nature. It might be aſked, whether there are three modes, or three natures that exiſted from eternity? And whether every one of theſe modes equally partake of the divine nature: Or, whether every nature hath not diſtinct modes of ſubſiſtence? However, if theſe modes exiſted from eternity, by *paternity*, *generation*, and *proceſſion*, we may conclude according to any ideas our language affords, or words to expreſs the ſubject, that the *Son* and *Holy Ghoſt* are eternally dependent upon, and inferior to the Father.

WHEN our philoſophical thoughts enter into eternity, either before or after time, they, like a drop of water in the ocean, are loſt. Our ideas of eternity are relative, and reſpect ſome meaſure of duration. When we apply them to exiſtence before

fore time, we cannot tell what it is. Our views can reach no further than ſome beginning of operation. We may go ſo far back as the creation of dependent beings, when GOD is ſaid to have begun his works, but *then* we are within the limits of time or meaſurable duration. A ſtep further we cannot go, without loſing ourſelves in conjecture. The modes of divine exiſtence we can know no farther than they are diſplayed in that plan, where the deſigns of his government are expoſed to our view, even the holy ſcriptures, which are the unerring guide concerning the knowledge of GOD.

BUT I muſt follow this gentleman one ſtep further. He ſays, "That in the exiſtence of GOD, "as well as in his eſſence, there is a *non-ſucceſſivity*, "whether ſucceſſion be applied to time or ſpace; "and in reſpect of this non-ſucceſſivity, eternal "generation can never imply or infer ground for "any of the objections made againſt it."

Anſ. I CANNOT ſtay to examine this propoſition critically, any further than it reſpects the preſent purpoſe: And tho' it is produced for an argument in favour of eternal generation, I think it makes directly againſt it. For where there is no *ſucceſſion*, there can be no generation, ſo far as we have any ideas thereof; and where there is generation, it indiſputably implies ſucceſſion. By all the ſupporters of eternal generation, it is maintained that it is by *communication of eſſence*; now does not communication imply ſucceſſion? Surely. —As there is no *ſucceſſion in* the divine eſſence or nature, there can be no *communication of* the divine nature. Wherever there is a communication of the ſame nature, there muſt be a ſucceſſion. There may

may be a creation, without a ſucceſſion in the creator; for the creature does not partake of the nature of the creator: But in begetting, the Son partakes of the ſame nature; yea, in the preſent caſe, it is maintained that the whole nature is communicated to the Son, by or from the Father; and if ſo, ſucceſſion muſt be a neceſſary conſequence thereof. How can that perſon be ſelf-exiſtent or non-ſucceſſive, who derives his very *perſon* from another? 'Tis no preſumption to aſk this of a philoſopher, who dares inveſtigate the unſearchable things of GOD.

PHILOSOPHY could not afford a better argument againſt eternal generation. Language does not afford us any idea of generation to a being, where there is not ſucceſſion: And unleſs the ſcriptures inform us expreſsly of its being attributed to GOD, no arguments beſide can prove it. There is no warrant from ſcripture to apply generation to Deity, but inferences taken from the words *begotten*, *Father*, and *Son*, which terms in ſcripture language do not imply generation; but do rather expreſs acts of power, goodneſs, &c. and are applied to ſeveral perſons beſide *Chriſt*. "Is he not thy Father that bought thee? Have we not all one Father? I have begotten thee by the goſpel. *Oneſimus*, whom I have begotten in my bonds. Who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the reſurrection of *Chriſt* from the dead, &c." But the phraſe eternal generation or eternally begotten, is no where in revelation, nor any terms that in the leaſt imply it.

WHEN the ſupporters of this ſcheme are preſſed with certain difficulties that attend it, they frequently

quently tell us, that "Eſſence doth not beget eſſence, but the perſons in the eſſence." Tho' I have often both read and heard this, yet I could never learn the meaning of it, or in what reſpect it favoured their cauſe. "Eſſence doth not beget eſſence," that is, I ſuppoſe, one Deity doth not beget another Deity, which is an abſolute truth; here we are agreed.—"But the perſons in the eſſence." This paſſeth my underſtanding. If they mean by it, that the eſſence begets the divine perſons, then all the divine perſons muſt be begotten; but this will wholly deſtroy the ſcheme, for according to it, only one perſon is begotten: Nay, the Father is expreſsly ſaid to be of none, neither begotten nor proceeding. To make this tally, we muſt ſuppoſe only two perſons begotten in the eſſence: Still this will infer, that the *Holy Ghoſt* has a two-fold manner of ſubſiſtence.—That the divine eſſence exiſted prior to the divine perſons: —That there is a difference betwixt the perſons and the eſſence in Deity: With many other ſhocking conſequences too grating to chriſtian ears to mention!

But as conſidering it in this light is ſo very inconſiſtent, let us view it in a glaſs of their poliſhing, who are the ſupporters of the ſcheme. "But the perſons in the eſſence:" That is, ſay they, "The divine eſſence ſelf-exiſts in the perſon of the Father, and the divine perſon of *Chriſt* is begotten by the Father." Not to mention how ill the explication agrees with the propoſition in terms; the one ſays the *perſons* are begotten, the other that only one perſon is begotten, which makes it neceſſary to provide another noſtrum to account for the ſubſiſtence of the *Holy Ghoſt*; but eternal proceſſion is at hand for this purpoſe. Then,

1. I must

1. I MUST obſerve, 'tis marvellous! that ſuch a demonſtrative account can be given of the manner the Son and Holy Ghoſt ſubſiſt in Deity; but none of the Father's ſubſiſtence, further than that he hath it of himſelf, which is denied of the other two divine perſons; this certainly carries the direct idea of inorigination in the Father, and a derived perſonal ſubſiſtence in the other two perſons in Deity.

2. I OBSERVE, that it is impoſſible upon this foundation, that the perſonal glory of the *Lord Jeſus* can be equal with the Father's. For if the divine eſſence ſelf-exiſts in the perſon of the Father, neceſſarily his perſonal glory muſt be *eſſential*, and ſelf-exiſtent: But if the divine perſon of the *Lord Jeſus* is begotten of the Father, his perſonal glory can neither be *eſſential*, nor ſelf-exiſtent, but *communicated*, *derived* glory from another; which may be called *relative*; but not ſelf-exiſtent glory. When there is ſuch an *eſſential* difference in the manner the divine perſons ſubſiſt in Deity, it is impoſſible the *ſame identical* glory can belong to all the perſons. The Father muſt have a ſupreme glory in Deity, which neither the Word nor Holy Ghoſt have; how then can they be equal or the ſame in perfection and glory? This leads me further to obſerve,

3. THAT here the maintainers of the ſcheme, and the *Arians* are almoſt at one. The *Arians* ſay, the divine perſon of the *Lord Jeſus* was created; the others ſay, he is begotten: Now, let the honeſt inquirer ſearch the ſcriptures and try, if he can find ſuch a difference betwixt a created and a begotten being, as we are bound to believe there is betwixt the higheſt created or begotten glory,

and the ſelf-exiſtent, unoriginated glory of the *Lord Jeſus*. There is a near analogy betwixt what is ſaid of the acts of GOD in creating and begetting; but none between any thing created or begotten, and ſelf-exiſtence. In this caſe, the *Arians* are the more conſiſtent of the two, in denying the ſelf-exiſtence of the *Lord Jeſus*, while they hold that he was created: But the others, while they hold that he was begotten, and had his perſonality communicated to him, at the ſame time ſay, that he is ſelf-exiſtent; which is a manifeſt contradiction in terms.

I MUST acknowledge here, that I have met with a modern author, an advocate for the ſcheme, more conſiſtent than the reſt. He wrote againſt the *Arian* hypotheſis, and finding it impoſſible to reconcile the terms in the ſcheme with *ſelf-exiſtence*, which the *Arians* object, he very complaiſantly (or rather blaſphemouſly) yields the ſelf-exiſtence of both WORD and HOLY GHOST, and writes a chapter, intituled, "*The divine perſon of the Father* ONLY SELF-EXISTENT."—Aſtoniſhing! That men to ſupport their darling notions of the *Lord Jeſus* being a *Son, as he is God*, or that his divine perſon was begotten, which they can never prove from revelation, ſhould thus give up his divine and ſelf-exiſtent glories into the hands of adverſaries to his proper divinity! Tell it not in chriſtian churches, leſt *Arians*, *Socinians*, yea, *Atheiſts*, rejoice!

THERE are ſome other things ſaid in favour of eternal generation, but they are ſo trifling, and ſo little to the purpoſe, that I ſhall not detain the reader with them, but come to the conſideration of the only argument that can be produced in favour

vour of that doctrine, viz. "The ANTIQUITY of it, and the MULTITUDE of its eſpouſers," which I ſhall conſider together.

Anſ. IT ſhould be well obſerved, that revelation is the true antiquity: And what GOD hath revealed and preſcribed therein, has more authority for binding the conſcience, than the dictates and traditions of multitudes in every age. There is a wide difference betwixt the primary antiquity and authority of the ſcriptures, and that which is traditional, flowing only from the cuſtom and obſervation of men. There is often too great regard paid to traditional antiquity, human authority, and the practice of multitudes, to the diſhonour of the *ſacred word.*

ANTIQUITY, ſimply conſidered, can never add ſtrength to a cauſe, nor honour to any profeſſion. *Sin* deſerves not applauſe, becauſe committed in *paradiſe*, and bears date with the ancient records of *Moſes*. Nor ſhould the *Romiſh beaſt* be held in repute, becauſe the myſtery of iniquity began to work in the Apoſtolic age. Human authority, if it has any weight, it is owing to the word of GOD; conſequently the divine teſtimony, which is more ancient than any other, is ſufficient without it. The celebrated *Hervey* hath a very notable remark to the preſent purpoſe. "Human autho-"rity," ſays he, "compared with the oracle of "revelation, is like a range of cyphers connected "with the initial figure, which, were they de-"tached, would be inſignificant; but in ſuch ſub-"ordination are conſiderable." A multitude of votaries cannot dignify a cauſe, nor prove any doctrine to be true. If it could, *Chriſt's* little flock muſt

muſt have been wrong in all ages, for they were always the feweſt.

ANTIQUITY, a great number of eſpouſers, and the ſentiments of great, learned, and good men, have, like pilgrims' ſtaves leaning againſt the walls of the noble ſtructure of divine revelation, been too often, by unthinking multitudes, miſtaken for the pillars that ſupported the magnificent fabric. It ſhews a cauſe to be weak indeed, when no better arguments can be brought to ſupport it. Every argument of this kind will ſerve the *Popiſh* cauſe againſt reformation, as well as eternal generation: But the reformers deſpiſed the weapons of antiquity, learning, and multitudes of votaries, and betook themſelves to the "*Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*" Had they obſerved the ſame rule in forming their own *ſyſtems*, as in oppoſing *Popery*, Proteſtants at this time would have known leſs about eternal generation, than they know of tranſubſtantiation: Such as were diſpoſed to ſupport the one, would have found it as difficult as *Papiſts* did to maintain the other. The ſum of all that can be ſaid for either is, that it is old, and has been countenanced by all thoſe who are beſt pleaſed with that in religion, which coſts them leaſt trouble to examine. I think a ſtriking parallel may be drawn betwixt theſe ſiſter myſteries, *tranſubſtantiation* and *eternal generation:* But I muſt return to my argument of *antiquity* in favour of the latter.

I CONFESS it is a very ancient method of pleading, but always in favour of error and deluſion. The *Jews* reſolved to (*r*) "bake cakes, and burn incenſe

(*r*) Jer. vii. 18. and xliv. 17.

incenſe to the queen of heaven, as their *princes* and *fathers* had done, &c." (*s*) The *Samaritans* could plead the cuſtom of their fathers, worſhipping in that mountain, for the ground of their own practice:—And how evident is it, that the *Jews* moſt fatally preferred the (*t*) traditions of their *Rabbies*, to the doctrine of the bleſſed JESUS. They thought it a ſufficient reaſon to reject him, becauſe none of the rulers and *Phariſees* believed in him.

BUT if we inquire into the antiquity of this hypotheſis, and find it fall ſhort of the period in which revelation was compiled and completed, it muſt be of *human invention*, and with reſpect to religion, deſerves to be *antiquated*.

BESIDES the ſcriptures, in the firſt two centuries, there were no ſettled forms of this doctrine of the Trinity. Every one had his own ſpeculations, which were very different, and ſome particularly odd. As Dr *Cave* ſays, "Things were not defined then as they are now, by explicit articles, and nice propoſitions." They not only differed from one another in their explications; but their beſt writers cannot be made orthodox, according to what we *now* call *ſtandard ſyſtems*, without forced and unnatural comments. To believe and agree in the ſcripture account of the Trinity was thought ſufficient, without differing about philoſophical diſtinctions concerning the *manner* of it: Till the *Sabellian* notion broke out, which ſeemed to explain the doctrine quite away; the ſupporters thereof ſuppoſing the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, to be only three modes of operation: Or rather, one *Being*, under two modes of operation: Making the *Son* and *Spirit* mere attributes, or emanations from

(*s*) John iv. 20. (*t*) Matt. xv. 2, 3. John vii. 48.

from the Supreme Being; the *Son* the wiſdom or reaſon of the Father, by which he made the world, &c. The *Spirit* a mere operation. This ſcheme was ſet up by *Praxeas*, about the end of the ſecond century, at *Rome:* Afterwards by *Noetus*, at *Epheſus*. And about the year 257, it was ſpread by *Sabellius*, at *Pentapolis:* From him it takes the name of *Sabellianiſm*. The riſe of this ſect gave occaſion for the church to be more exact in their terms and explications.—Notwithſtanding, even in the middle of the third century, there ſeems not to be any ſyſtematic notion of the Trinity agreed upon in the church, which is evident from *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria*, who fell into hereſy in writing againſt *Sabellianiſm*, not knowing what to ſet up againſt it, till better informed by *Dionyſius* of *Rome*.

THE general opinion of theſe ancients, concerning the SON, was, "That he exiſted in the Father from eternity, and at the creation, the Father put him without him, to create the world; which they called *a bringing him forth*, *prolation*, or *generation*. Whilſt he was in the Father, he was GOD from eternity, as every thing that is in GOD, is GOD; but by his coming out from the Father, as *he became the Son of God*, ſo from thence they ſtiled him *God of God*." If they had any notion of his exiſting as a perſon from eternity with the Father, it was either *potentially*, as *Euſebius* repreſents it in his account of the *Nicene* faith; or, according to *Tertullian's* diſtinction, as the *ratio* or *reaſon* of the Father from eternity, 'till brought forth into *ſermo* or *word*, and ſo became diſtinct from the Father, and as ſuch a SON. That this was the general doctrine of the three firſt centuries, is allowed by Dr *Waterland*, who cannot be ſuſpected any ways inclinable

inclinable to betray the cauſe of *eternal generation*. In this doctrine, the reader will obſerve, we have nothing of an *eternal*, but a *temporary generation* only.

THAT this was the notion which prevailed at the council of *Nice* is manifeſt, in that they *anathematiſed* all who ſhould ſay, "That he did not exiſt before he was *begotten*." The word *begotten* here, is not to be underſtood of his generation of the *Virgin*, for this decree was made againſt the *Arians*, who never denied his exiſting before that; but it refers to the generation deſcribed above. *Arius* and his followers, having explained this temporary generation into a real creation, maintaining *Chriſt* to be a mere creature; the *ſynod*, in oppoſition to this, brought in the word *conſubſtantial*, to ſhew, that tho' they thought the Son generated, yet he was not created as other creatures; but that he was GOD from eternity in the Father; tho' as a SON, he was generated and brought forth as above. This was the faith of the *Nicene* council in the fourth century; ſo that no ſuch notion of *eternal generation* was in the church for 300 years, as it is now explained.

AS to the original of the doctrine of *eternal generation*, I will not poſitively determine, but if we may depend upon the authority of ſome, well acquainted with the antiquities of thoſe periods, it was the invention of apoſtate *Jews*; "which ſelf-contradictory notions, (ſaith a very eminent author) with other things of their production, have more confounded the chriſtian faith, than any other poſitions:" And further ſays, "that *Peter Galatine* cites the perſon whoſe manufacture this doctrine was."

HOWEVER

HOWEVER, it is certain, that the doctrines of the primitive fathers are not the rule of our faith. I ſuppoſe very few of the greateſt advocates for antiquity will acquieſce in that notion of theirs, "Of the FATHER bringing forth the SON of himſelf at the creation, and putting him without him;" tho' it was general among them.

BUT if the antiquity of this doctrine ſhould ſtill be thought worthy of regard; and that it ſhould have a place in our *credenda*, for its goodly age of 1400 years; then we are no more to judge of doctrines by their evidence, and agreeableneſs to ſcripture; but by their age; and if ſo, it would have been much to the advantage of this, that it had been 373 years older. Indeed 1400 years is a great age; but if it began no ſooner, it is not the true antiquity, and no more true for being of that age, than if it had been only 14 days old.

STILL, ſay its friends, it is venerable for its age.—But ſhould this be granted, ſome grey-headed errors, will for the ſame reaſon, claim the ſame reſpect. *Sabellianiſm* prevailed both in the *eaſtern* and *weſtern* churches, 100 years before the council of *Nice*; 'till *Arianiſm* took up the ball, and turned the waters of contention into another channel; this was confirmed in ſeveral councils, and kept the ſeat of *orthodoxy* for many years. Now, 'tis certain theſe errors have a better right to the antique title, as the latter was the very occaſion of inventing this hypotheſis.—I do not know what is meant by the ſtream of antiquity, ſo much boaſted of in favour of this ſcheme, if it be not that it has been favoured by the ſtrongeſt party, and continued long; and if this be the rule to meaſure truth, the ancient errors ſhould be naturalized among

among our ſyſtems: This is a fine argument in favour of *popery*, which, it ſeems, the longer it laſts, will be the better.

HAVING anſwered the arguments in favour of *eternal generation*, before I proceed to conſider the texts produced for proof of it, I muſt remove a prejudice which ſome are ready to be overtaken with. It perhaps will be alledged, that tho' I have been finding fault with this *ſcheme*, becauſe the terms therein are unſcriptural: Yet, in treating of the ſame doctrine, I uſe terms not to be found in ſcripture. To this I anſwer,

THAT tho' it would be highly commendable, in ſuch ſublime doctrines, if every one would both ſpeak and write in the language of revelation as near as poſſible, ſince the truth is in danger, in a number of human conſequences; yet, it ſhould be carefully obſerved, that there is a great difference betwixt one bringing forth all the evidence he can for the illuſtration of any particular truth, that others may be invited to embrace it, upon the evidence offered which hath perſuaded himſelf:—And another perſon or more, forming a ſcheme of human deductions for a rule of faith to be impoſed on others, upon the pain of damnation, whether they have any evidence to believe them or not. A miſtake in the firſt caſe remains with the author; none is deſired to believe further than they ſee evidence to ſupport the truth:—But an error in the latter caſe is fundamental, and of the moſt dangerous conſequence.

BESIDES, I do not altogether reject the terms in the ſcheme, becauſe they are not in ſcripture; but for their being ſuch as will bear no tole-

rable meaning conſiſtent with what is revealed of that doctrine. For the ſame reaſon, I diſlike ſome explications of ſcriptural phraſes, becauſe they have not the leaſt degree of analogy with the texts they are pretended explications of: And tho' I have uſed ſome terms not expreſſed in ſcripture, yet the ſenſe is included therein by neceſſary conſequence. As for example, the words *plurality* and *Trinity*, tho' not in ſcripture, yet the plain and undeniable meaning of them is—"Theſe THREE are one." The ſame may be ſaid of the terms BEING, ESSENCE, EXISTENCE, &c. As to the terms SUBSISTENCE, and PERSON, which I have ſometimes uſed, not becauſe I think in a ſtrict ſenſe they are properly applicable to the ſubject, but for want of other words more proper in their ſtead; and becauſe they will be beſt underſtood, long cuſtom having eſtabliſhed the uſe of them. It might give uneaſineſs to the minds of ſome chriſtians to introduce any new terms into this doctrine, and ſo loſe that advantage propoſed from any clearer ideas included in them.

I CONCEIVE it will be acceptable to moſt of my readers, to be informed on what occaſion thoſe terms came to be applied to this ſubject. For this purpoſe let it be obſerved, that about the ſecond century, the prevailing part of the leaders in the church, in oppoſition to the Sabellian doctrine, adopted the word *Hypoſtaſis* to expreſs the doctrine of the Trinity by, which was not till then uſed in that doctrine: And to appear as far contrary to Sabellianiſm as poſſible, they made it to ſignify *ſubſtance*, which is the direct oppoſite to that opinion they wanted to deſtroy. But the difficulty which this arbitrary definition involved the cauſe in ſoon appeared, from the neceſſity of guarding againſt

againſt the other extreme: For the term *ſubſtance* led immediately into the notion of *three Beings* or *Gods*. In the heat of oppoſition, a general council was called, where it was determined, that the term *ſubſtance*, as applied to the Trinity, ſhould not ſignify a *diſtinct being*, *or ſeparate ſubſtance*, but ſomething more than a name; that is, ſomething *real* or *ſubſtantial*, which afterwards was called *ſubſiſtence*. This was ſtill defining without authority from revelation: But the *Latin* church, not ſatisfied with the word *Hypoſtaſis* being applied to the Trinity, brought in the word *Perſona* or *Perſon*, which continues to this day, tho' as little countenanced from ſcripture, in this application of it, as the other. † The word indeed is in our tranſlation of Heb. i. 3. No doubt in conformity to ſeveral hundred years cuſtom before. But that *Hypoſtaſis*, the word from which *Perſon* is taken, has no relation to that ſubject; and that *perſon* is not a proper tranſlation of it, I ſhall ſhew when we come to conſider that text.

ONLY allow me to obſerve here, that the word *perſon*, is not applied to any of the *divine three* in any place of ſcripture: But for as much as the properties

† If the word *perſon* is applied to the Trinity in that ſenſe which it is underſtood, and applied to finite beings, among whom it always implies a diſtinct underſtanding and will, as well as a diſtinct individual Being, and as the perſons are multipled, ſo are the diſtinct Beings: To aſſert three perſons in Deity in this ſenſe, and yet but one GOD, would be a groſs contradiction. *Arians* take the advantage of this difficulty in the uſe of the word *perſon*, againſt the orthodox; and the method *they* take to extricate themſelves, only involves them in more difficulties, being liable to the ſame, and other exceptions. They ſay, that the divine eſſence ſubſiſts in a different manner in each of the three perſons, which is the foundation of their diſtinct perſonality: Or thus, the different manner that each perſon poſſeſſes the divine eſſence, the one as a *Father*, the other as a *Son*, and a third as *Holy Ghoſt*, is the foundation of their diſtinct perſonality. This certainly implies a difference of perſonal glory, and can never be maintained, but at the expence of the proper Deity of both the *Son* and *Holy Ghoſt*.

properties of real being and exiſtence is attributed to each of them, the ancients no doubt thought they might ſafely uſe the word *hypoſtaſis* with the above limitation, and the moderns the word *ſubſiſtence*, which they reckon the import of it ſo limited: And the ſum of all that can be ſaid for the uſe of the word *perſon* is, that real perſonal properties, powers, attributes, and works, are affirmed of *each* of them, and nothing ſaid that is inconſiſtent with perſonality. Tho' all this ſhould be granted oeconomically; yet it will by no means favour the uſe that is commonly made of the term; nor make it neceſſary that it ſhould be uſed at all, ſince it is not ſo uſed in revelation. God hath revealed terms ſufficient to expreſs all he deſigned we ſhould know of him: But if others will add to theſe the inventions of men, we muſt leave them to take their own way.

And obſerve further, that ſuch terms as have been ſanctified by men,—received upon their authority, and held ſacred in religion, (tho' only the product of unguarded zeal, and oppoſition among parties, in which every one adopted ſuch terms as ſeemed moſt contrary to the opinions they would have condemned) have been of ill conſequence, both to ſuch as have believed them, and thoſe who have zealouſly oppoſed them. By the former, theſe terms have been received implicitly, without knowing how they were applicable to the ſubject; and yet ſo zealouſly defended, as often to iſſue in perſecuting to death ſuch as would not follow them in the dark. On the other hand, many of thoſe who oppoſed the uſe of thoſe terms, from the wrong application of them, have carried their oppoſition too far, not diſtinguiſhing betwixt the truth as made known in revelation, and as cloathed with

with dark and unmeaning phraſes by men. Conſequently, the truth being abuſed by the one, have occaſioned the denial of it by the other. To this cauſe, I refer all the oppoſition which has been made to the proper divinity of *Jeſus Chriſt* by thoſe called *Arians*, and others, which took its riſe upon the firſt application of ſuch terms to the doctrine of the Trinity. Had they reſtricted their oppoſition to ſuch innovations, it had been laudable; but the hiſtory of 1400 years ſhews the caſe to be otherwiſe.

THOSE who have been called the orthodox, have alſo occaſioned endleſs controverſies concerning the Deity of *Jeſus Chriſt*, by not properly diſtinguiſhing betwixt what is ſaid of him in ſcripture, with relation to his inferior oeconomical character, and the proofs which ſupport his proper Deity. Having accuſtomed themſelves to confound theſe, *Arius*, and his followers, took the advantage of their applying the terms which belonged to the official oeconomical character of *Chriſt* to the proof of his Deity; and from theſe, as premiſes, very juſtly concluded the arguments of the orthodox weak; and the conſequence they drew was, that *Jeſus Chriſt* was not properly GOD. The orthodox, inſtead of mending the fault in their own hypotheſis, invented a *generation*, or *begetting of his divine perſon from all eternity*, which rather ſtrengthened than anſwered the objections of the *Arians*, ſince that *filiation* plainly implied the *derivation of his perſon*. For tho' the generation or begetting be carried into eternity, (which is without authority from ſcripture) the terms themſelves ſtill prove it to have had a beginning.

THE premiſes the *Arians* build upon are granted

ed by the orthodox: Here both are miſtaken. The former are right in their concluſion from ſuch premiſes; but inconſiſtent with ſcripture by the miſtake in the choice of their premiſes. The latter are right in maintaining the proper Deity of *Chriſt*; but inconſiſtent with *themſelves* in the manner they pretend to ſupport their cauſe. The error of both lies, in not attending to the diſtinction betwixt what relates to the inferior oeconomical character of *Chriſt*, and the paſſages from which his Deity may be more directly proved. The *Arians* commonly argue from the former, and thence conclude his inferior Deity to the Supreme GOD, which their premiſes will very well bear; and which the orthodox might, and ſhould grant without any danger to the truth, while there are other inconteſtable evidences of his proper Deity, which is not liable to the exceptions commonly brought againſt it. All the advantage the *Arians* have gained, is from the orthodox pretending to prove their cauſe from arguments which have not the leaſt relation to it: And the Deity of the Spirit has been denied and oppoſed from the ſame principles. Such are the woeful effects of the ancients, adding their own inventions to religion, and impoſing them on the conſciences of others!

SECT.

SECT. IV.

THE next thing to be conſidered, is the paſſages of ſcripture generally brought to prove the *eternal generation* of the *Son of God*, and that the terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, are *natural*, *neceſſary*, and *internal* characters of *Deity*.

HERE the advocates for this doctrine are ſtrangely divided in their ſentiments. There are ſome texts applied as clear proofs of it, which others of them ſay have not the leaſt relation to the ſubject. Yea, ſome of them are ſo ſelf-denied, as plainly to contradict themſelves in different parts of their own works.—"A kingdom divided againſt itſelf cannot ſtand."—As there is no need to ſay much about ſuch texts as themſelves doubt of,—I ſhall endeavour to make it evident, that ſuch as are generally ſuſtained proofs of that doctrine, are nothing to the purpoſe; but rather favour that oeconomical ſenſe, which the ſcriptures repreſent theſe terms in.

THE firſt that ſhould claim our attention is that in the ſecond Pſalm: But as I have fairly demonſtrated, that it refers to *Chriſt*'s oeconomical ſonſhip, in p. 155. I ſhall only deſire the reader to read what is there ſaid over again.

I MUST here notice, how ſtrangely a learned critic has tortured a paſſage in the 110th Pſalm, to make it favour the cauſe of *eternal generation*. The text ſays, "From (or *of*) the womb of the (early) morning, thou haſt (to thee, or thou ſhalt have, *marg.*) the due of thy youth." But he makes it read thus,—"*Of mine own eſſence before* the early morning,

morning, or *before the world was*, thou hadſt the due of thy youth, or birth; as noting his eternal generation before all worlds." Here the words "*mine own eſſence*, before the early morning," or as he interprets it, "before all worlds," are thruſt into the text, contrary to the very ſenſe and ſcope of the paſſage, that it might appear a proof of that doctrine which hath no better foundation in revelation to ſupport it. This is one text which our modern advocates for eternal generation acknowledge has no relation to it.

ANOTHER we have in the Proverbs, (*x*) "I was *ſet up* from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was *brought forth*:—Before the mountains were ſettled; before the hills, was I *brought forth*." A learned modern Doctor affirms in one part of his writings, that this "is to be underſtood "of the *eternal generation* and ſonſhip of *Chriſt*; "and the repetition of the phraſe *brought forth*, "partly ſhews the importance of it; it being a "matter of *infinite* moment and concern, and de"ſerving the *ſtricteſt attention* and obſervation: "And partly ſhews the certainty of it; the eter"nal generation of *Chriſt* being an *article of faith* "*moſt ſurely to be believed*." But in another part of his works, the ſame author ſays, "This paſſage "is a glorious proof of *Chriſt*'s *eternal exiſtence*, "tho' not ſo clear a one of his *eternal Sonſhip*. "The phraſes of *ſetting up*, *poſſeſſing*, *bringing forth*, "and *bringing up*, ſeem rather to refer to his *media"torial office*." The Doctor's candor is very commendable, in making ſo fair a retreat. In great humility he would rather contradict himſelf, than expoſe

(*x*) Prov. viii. 23, 24, 25.

expoſe an article of faith moſt ſurely to be believed,—a matter of infinite moment,—to the charge of ſelf-contradiction. The terms in the paſſage ſuit ſo ill with his leading ſentiment, "*That Chriſt is a Son, as he is God*,—that he was begotten as GOD, &c." if applied to it would wholly deſtroy the *important truth*. It was neceſſary either to apply them another way, or call in the aſſiſtance of figures, (or myſteries, the only remedies in ſuch caſes of diſtreſs) which can never be accommodated or explained on ſuch a principle, and muſt only involve the author in endleſs criticiſms and debates, about words that have no meaning at all when ſo applied.

WE have another ſuppoſed proof of eternal generation in the *Proverbs*, (*y*) "What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canſt tell?" Which the ſame Doctor paraphraſes thus, "*What* "*is his name*? That is his nature and perfections, "which are incomprehenſible and ineffable: And "ſeeing he is a Son of the ſame nature with him, "ſay what is his nature and perfections? Declare "*his generation*, and the manner of it, his divine "*filiation*, and in what *claſs* it is."

THE *Doctor* makes a very unſuitable ſupplement to the text, that it may ſeem to favour his cauſe. It ſays nothing about *generation* or *filiation*. Nor has it any relation to GOD, or *Jeſus Chriſt*, his Son, at all. † But tho' we ſhould grant they are intended here, and by *name* is meant *nature*, the queſtion will only refer to his nature and perfections, not his *generation*, and the *manner of it*,—not his *filiation*, and in what *claſs* it is? Beſides, if ge-

(*y*) Prov. xxx. 4. † See p. 154.

neration muſt be forced into the text, the queſtion relates as much to the generation of the one, as the other. I ſay, if *name* here ſignify *generation*, as the *Doctor* ſays, it muſt refer to the generation of the *Father*, as well as the generation of the *Son*; which effectually deſtroys all his fine paraphraſe.

WHAT *Iſaiah* ſaith, is held as another proof of *eternal generation*.—(z) "He was taken from priſon and from judgment: and who ſhall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living." This middle clauſe is very differently applied by commentators. Some to the incarnation of *Chriſt*:—Some to the eternal duration of his life after his reſurrection:—And others, both ancient and modern, apply it to his numberleſs offſpring, or ſpiritual ſeed. Any one of theſe is more conſiſtent, than to ſcrew up the meaning of the expreſſion to an eternal begetting of the divine perſon of the *Lord Jeſus*, as many inſinuate; which neither the words themſelves, nor theſe going before or following them, will by any means allow. The verſe before, and this, are a ſtriking deſcription of our Redeemer's ſurpaſſing humility, under the ſeveral ſteps of the *Jews* ſtubborn cruelty towards him.

THEREFORE, taking the words in connection, I think the following ſentiment is clearly pointed out: "Who ſhall declare his generation?" Who ſhall declare the perverſe obſtinacy, the wickedneſs, and injuſtice of that generation in which he lived?—So cruel as thus to oppreſs the innocent Lamb of GOD; againſt whom their ſtretched invention, tho' aſſiſted with diabolical malice, could find

(z) Iſa. liii. 8.

find no charge worthy of puniſhment, or death. The Prophet therefore adds, "He was cut off out of the land of the living, (yet not for himſelf, as *Daniel* ſpeaks, for no crime of his own, but) for the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſmitten." Which is a plain reaſon for both the depth of his humility in his voluntary ſufferings and death for his people, and the unaccountable cruelty of that crooked and perverſe generation the *Jews*, and *Roman* governors, who conſpired to crucify an innocent perſon, in whom they could find no fault. This ſenſe of the text is highly favoured by the character *Moſes* gives *Iſrael* in his time, whom he calls a (*a*) "crooked and perverſe generation." The language is almoſt the ſame in both texts.

But what will put this ſenſe of the text beyond all exception, and fix it as the only meaning thereof, is, that the ſame word Dor, which is here tranſlated *generation*, is through all the Old Teſtament put for a certain period of time; and the people that lived in that age or period,—a certain race or claſs of people, living at the ſame time, as in the laſt cited text; and alſo in theſe, (*b*) "One generation paſſeth away, and another generation cometh.—The Lord will have war with *Amalek* from generation to generation. Lord thou haſt been our dwelling place in all generations." In generation and generation. *marg.* Now, as the word Dor in theſe, and many other places, invariably ſignifies the ſame thing, and never the *act* or *manner* of *generation*, it is certainly ſufficient to ſettle the meaning of it in this text, eſpecially as the ſcope ſo evidently favours it: And it

(*a*) Deut. xxxii. 5. (*b*) Eccl. i. 4. Exo. xvii. 16. Pſa. xc. 1.

it muſt be a baſe prejudice, that makes people impoſe a ſenſe upon the text, which neither it, nor any ſimilar one hath the leaſt relation to.

As to *Nebuchadnezzar* ſaying, the (*c*) "form of the fourth, (whom he ſaw in the furnace) is like the *Son of God*," I have ſhewed, p. 154, that he could not mean *Chriſt* by what he ſaid, and ſhall only add here, that it is very difficult to account for *Nebuchadnezzar*'s obtaining ſuch knowledge of *Chriſt*; but more ſo, how his words can be made a proof of eternal generation. But ſhould his knowledge of *Chriſt* be admitted; he that is mentioned as the *Son of God*, *Nebuchadnezzar* calls a *man*, which is very inconſiſtent with the notion of his being *God*, as he is a *Son*. The words would rather infer, that his manhood is included in the notion of ſonſhip, which belongs to his inferior character, as he is called "the *Angel of the God* of *Shadrach*, &c." But I wiſh them much good of all the help they can get from *Nebuchadnezzar* to their weak cauſe; for I chuſe not that any ſhould imagine the cauſe I contend for ſtands in need of any ſuch aſſiſtance.

The next text is in *Micah*,—(*d*) "Out of thee (*Bethlehem*) ſhall he come forth into me, that is to be ruler in *Iſrael*: Whoſe *goings forth* have been from of *old*, *from everlaſting*." I own this is ſpoken of *Chriſt* the *Meſſiah*; but to apply it to the manner of his exiſtence, or an act of eternal generation, is doing the greateſt injuſtice to the text, which mentions his GOINGS FORTH in the plural, and not any *one act*: Beſides, it cannot be meant

(*c*) Dan. iii. 25. (*d*) Micah v. 2.

meant of the *Father*'s *begetting* the *Son*, ſince the *goings forth* are ſpoken as acts of CHRIST, and not of the FATHER.

IT may refer to the egreſs of his wiſdom and love, concerning the future ſalvation of his people, who were choſen in him. (*e*) "For verily, he was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifeſt in theſe laſt times." Or to the exerciſe of his wiſdom and power, in making and governing all things.—(*f*) "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." If we underſtand the Prophet *Micah* in this ſenſe, the Apoſtle *John* will be the beſt commentator in the beginning of his goſpel.

THESE *goings forth* may alſo include the great works he performed, and remarkable appearances he made to *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, &c. And this ſenſe of his goings forth, is no way contrary to the other clauſe, "from everlaſting;" for there ſeems plainly to be a gradation in the two parts of the ſentence. So that theſe appearances he made, with his works of creation and government, may be pointed out in his "goings forth of old," which agree well with an expreſſion of the Pſalmiſt on the ſame ſubject.—(*g*) "O GOD, when thou *wenteſt forth* before thy people," &c. and alſo with the ſcripture uſe of the word *of old*: And the other idea of his councils of love, wiſdom, and grace, concerning his people, will be meant in his "*goings forth from everlaſting*." Now, inſtead of that text being a proof of *eternal generation*, it rather exhibits his oeconomical character, ſet up from everlaſting as the mediator, guide, and governor

(*e*) 1 Pet. i. 20. (*f*) Col. i. 16. (*g*) Pſa. lxviii, 7.

vernor of his church; together with the diſpenſations of his grace and goodneſs to them, in ancient ages of the world.—It is the ſame whom *Micah* ſays ſhould be born in *Bethlehem*, and be ruler in *Iſrael*, which is none other than *Jeſus Chriſt*, the SON OF GOD.

I HAVE now done with the texts in the Old Teſtament, which are brought to ſupport eternal generation, and I think he will be very wiſe that can find it in any one of them. The firſt text in the New Teſtament that claims our conſideration, is the anſwer of *Peter* to his maſter's queſtion, "whom ſay ye that I am? *Peter* anſwered, thou art *Chriſt*, the SON of the living GOD." The reader will remember, that this text was conſidered at ſome length, as an objection againſt that ſenſe of *Chriſt*'s ſonſhip, which I formerly proved. To what was ſaid thereon, beginning at p. 184, I beg leave to add in this place:

THAT it increaſes my aſtoniſhment, to find ſo many who profeſs the higheſt regard for the divine glory of *Chriſt*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, and ſeem to abhor the conceits of ſuch as are for accounting them no more than inferior Deities: Yet agreeing with them in the very principles on which they build their ſcheme, particularly in limiting the term LIVING GOD, to the perſon of the *Father*, excluſive of the *Word* and *Holy Ghoſt*. This is the certain conſequence of all they ſay for their cauſe, from this and ſeveral other ſimilar texts. Indeed the *Arian* ſcheme, and that called the *Orthodox*, both require it ſhould be ſo; and without this be ſuppoſed, they muſt both fall. The *Arian* ſays, he is GOD, but inferior to, and created by the *living* GOD:—The *Orthodox* ſay, he is a *Son*, as he is *God*, and was begotten

gotten by the *living* GOD. In both, the term *living God* is ſuppoſed to be peculiar to the *Father*, excluſive of *Chriſt* and the Spirit. Dr *Clark*, the modern champion for the *Arian* cauſe, lays it down as a maxim, "that the word GOD in ſcripture, "never ſignifies a complex notion of more perſons "than one; but always means one perſon only, viz. "The perſon of the Father ſingly, or the perſon "of the Son ſingly."

NOW, if this is granted them, all other difficulties they reckon eaſily ſurmountable in proving the inferior Deity of *Chriſt*; for, ſay they, "all theſe terms, *living God*, *only wiſe God*, *one God*, *great God*, &c. muſt be limited to the Father only, conſequently all that is ſaid of *Chriſt* as GOD, is in an inferior ſenſe, as the Father's ſervant, inſtrument, &c. And the ſupporters of the other ſcheme alſo, muſt in conſiſtency with their own terms, explain every text where the *Son of God* is mentioned in favour of the *Arian* hypotheſis. For if the divine perſon of *Chriſt* be included in the term *living God*, or in the term *God*, where he is mentioned as the *Son of God*, then their whole ſcheme is deſtroyed; and all I have been contending for granted, viz. That it is under another conſideration that he is called *Son*, than that wherein he is called *God*.

THE *Holy Ghoſt* by this hypotheſis, muſt be alſo excluded from the glory of this title *living God*. Peremptorily to exclude him, is the ſame as to ſay, he is not the *living God*. Yet for the honour and ſafety of this ſcheme, excluded he muſt be, let the conſequence be ever ſo dangerous to truth; for to include the *Holy Ghoſt* in this term, makes the divine

divine perſon of the *Lord Jeſus*, to be the Son of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which will wound this *human ſcheme* in a very tender part, viz. that of his being begotten only by the perſon of the Father. Now, let the admirers of this ſcheme, chuſe whether they will degrade the divine perſons of the *Word* and *Spirit*, by denying them the honour of this title the *living God*, which is the ſame with ſaying they are not GOD; or expoſe their human hypotheſis to the charge of ſelf-contradiction, which, if maintained, ſets revelation at variance with itſelf. Every impartial reader muſt account it an amazing infatuation in favour of that darling notion, which has not the leaſt countenance in ſcripture; that to ſupport it, they will give up the glory of *Chriſt* into the hands of ſuch as affirm that he is not properly GOD. As for my own part, in all the 25 texts where this term living GOD is mentioned, I ſee no reaſon why the *divine three* may not be included, without doing violence to the analogy of faith, or the ſcope of the paſſages.

THERE are two paſſages in *John*,—(*h*) which a great deal of weight is laid upon, in ſupport of *Chriſt* being a Son, as he is GOD. Our *Lord*, in the courſe of his teaching had aſſerted, that GOD was his Father. The *Jews*, through their malice and prejudice, charge him with blaſphemy; for according as they drew the inference, by ſaying that GOD was his father, he made himſelf equal with GOD: And taking it for granted, that their inference was juſt, the advocates for eternal generation conclude, that *Chriſt* is GOD, as he is a *Son*.

Anſ. IF

(*h*) John v. 18, 19. and x. 30,—39.

Anſ. If our *Lord*'s anſwers to the *Jews* in both places be carefully attended to, eſpecially the firſt, which ſerves to explain the other, it will appear quite different from what either the *Jews* or their modern friends do ſuppoſe. As to the firſt, we are told that *Jeſus* ſaid, "my Father worketh hitherto, and I work." For this the *Jews* ſought to kill him, becauſe he ſaid God was his father, making himſelf equal with God. Now, hear his defence, "Then anſwered *Jeſus*, and ſaid unto them, verily, verily, I ſay unto you, the Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the father do.—For the Father loveth the Son, and ſheweth him all things that himſelf doth: And he will ſhew him greater works than theſe, that ye may marvel.—I can do nothing of myſelf, I ſeek not mine own will, but the will of the father that ſent me." In this reply of our *Lord*, it is very plain that he contradicts their inference, by declaring in the ſtrongeſt terms his inferior character, *as a Son*. As God, he knows all things of himſelf,—can do all things by his own power and will,—is ſupreme and independent,—and his knowledge, will, and power are the ſame, not different from, much leſs ſubordinate to the Father's: But all this he expreſsly denies of himſelf *as a Son*; therefore, if we will believe Jesus, rather than the malicious *Jews*, he is not *God*, as he is a *Son*: Or he muſt be ſuch a God as ſome think he is, ſubordinate, inferior, and dependent, for theſe are plain in his character of himſelf, as a Son. So that this paſſage is a direct proof of his ſonſhip belonging to his inferior character, and therefore may be added to the other arguments to that purpoſe above.

As to the other paſſage, it muſt be of the ſame import, if one place may be allowed to explain

another. Here alſo they accuſe him for calling himſelf the Son of GOD; and he had certainly the ſame notion of his own ſonſhip now as formerly, ſo that we might here ſhew his ſenſe of ſonſhip, from his former anſwer to a ſimilar charge againſt him; but as he replies in other terms, we ſhall conſider how far they favour the cauſe they are brought to ſupport.

IT is obſervable, that tho' the character of the *Meſſiah* be ſo exhibited in the Old Teſtament, that ſome among the *Jews* might probably know he was GOD, as well as man: Yet they were in general ſhamefully ignorant of his true character. For had they thought of his Deity, that queſtion of our *Lord*, would not have ſilenced them, "If the *Meſſiah* be *David*'s Son, how could *David* call him LORD?" Or, "If *David* calls him LORD, how is he his Son?" The leaſt thought of his Deity, would have eaſily reſolved this difficulty; but it is evident they had no ſuch notion of the *Meſſiah*. The deſign of theſe wicked *Jews*, was to bring the higheſt accuſations againſt our Saviour, and to load him with the groſſeſt calumnies that their wit or malice could draw from his words or actions, "Laying wait for him, and ſeeking to catch ſomething out of his mouth, that they might accuſe him." If he ſpake of his kingdom, it is ſedition and rebellion, he is an enemy to *Cæſar*:—If he calls GOD his Father, their malice conſtrues it blaſphemy, in making himſelf equal with GOD: And ſhall a conſequence ſtrained from our Saviour's words by malicious *Jews*, be ſuſtained an only warrant for a "doctrine of the *utmoſt conſequence*, an article of faith moſt *ſurely to be believed*, on which the ſalvation of our ſouls depends?"

AND

AND that the conſequence was ſtrained, is evident from our LORD's reply, "*Jeſus* anſwered them, is it not written in your law; I ſaid, ye are GODS? If he called *them* GODS, unto whom the word of GOD came; and the ſcriptures cannot be broken: Say ye of him, whom the Father hath *ſanctified*, and *ſent* into the world, thou blaſphemeſt, becauſe I ſaid, I am the SON OF GOD?" Where we may obſerve, (1) That he doth neither plainly own nor deny himſelf to be the true GOD.—Yet, (2) If he had not been the true GOD, he would have renounced their concluſion of equality with GOD; but he only denies the juſtneſs of their inference, that his calling himſelf the *Son of God*, was in conſequence making himſelf GOD. Since he admits the one, we may ſafely conclude he is GOD; and ſeeing he denies the other, we may fairly infer that his *ſonſhip* does not denote his Deity. For (3) it is plain, his deſign in the anſwer he gave, was to refute the calumny of the *Jews*, and ſhew the weakneſs of their inference, that the name *Son of God* does neceſſarily ſignify one *equal with God*. The argument our LORD uſes here, is what is called *á minori ad majus*; putting the reaſon of his more unqueſtionable right to this title, upon the ſuperiority of his character and miſſion, or his more immediate commiſſion from the Father, than thoſe Prophets, Kings, and Judges, who were called GODS, from the word of GOD coming to them. The argument plainly runs thus, They who were originally in and of this world, were made Prophets, Teachers, and Kings, merely by the word of GOD coming to them, receiving their commiſſion by ſome voice, viſion, divine meſſage or inſpiration, and they were called GODS: Therefore the Meſſiah, who was not originally of this world,

but

but was ſanctified, or anointed, ſet apart, and ſent immediately by GOD himſelf into this world for ſuch incomparable purpoſes, may ſurely be called the *Son of God*, without danger of blaſphemy. In ſhort, if they were called *Gods*, the Meſſiah may well be called the *Son of God*. (4) It is very remarkable, that tho' the *Jews* built part of their accuſation upon his ſaying, "I and my Father are one," yet our LORD does not directly anſwer to theſe words, becauſe they bear an intimation of his Deity: But applies himſelf to anſwer that part of it, taken from his calling *God his father*, and himſelf the *Son of God*; denying the charge, and refuting their inference, no doubt, to teach them and us both, that the term *Son of God*, does not prove *equality with God*.

INDEED, if the character *Son of God* here, means his Deity, it muſt infer his equality with GOD, as the *Jews* inferred: But beſides the difficulty, or rather impoſſibility of the divine nature of *Chriſt* being *ſanctified*, or *anointed*, and *ſent*; which he ſays he was, *as a Son*; it plainly deſtroys the whole force of our bleſſed Saviour's argument, and concludes his defence trifling; and conſequently, leaves the accuſation of the malicious *Jews* in full force againſt the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt!*

TO illuſtrate this a little further, it ſhould be obſerved, that the queſtion betwixt our LORD and the *Jews*, was not whether the Meſſiah was a *divine perſon* or not; but whether he to whom they were ſpeaking, was the *Meſſiah* or not. Therefore, when he aſſumed an epithet, which, as uſed in the Old Teſtament, was characteriſtical of the *Meſſiah*, they charge him with blaſphemy; for, he as they ſuppoſed, being only a mere man, had aſſumed a title

title which the ſcriptures appropriated to the promiſed *Meſſiah*, whom the ſame ſcriptures call the *mighty* GOD. "The GOD of the whole earth ſhall he be called." To be the *Meſſiah*, and to be the *Son of God*, was reckoned by the *Jews*, and may be by us chriſtians, the ſame. The Pſamiſt applies them both to the ſame perſon in the ſecond Pſalm; and in the New Teſtament, the ſame arguments are uſed to prove the one as the other. The Old Teſtament pointed forth; and the Apoſtles preached the *Meſſiah*, the power and the wiſdom of GOD. As in the former, *Son of God* was a known character of the *Meſſiah*, ſo the Angel intimated under that term to the *virgin*, that ſhe was to be the mother of the *Meſſiah*. "The holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the SON of GOD." This ſhe underſtood to be the promiſed *Meſſiah*, and therefore ſays in her ſong, "He hath holpen his ſervant *Iſrael*, in remembrance of his mercy, as he ſpake to our fathers, to *Abraham*, and to his ſeed for ever."

NOW, tho' the *Jews*, through their traditions, and hopes of a *Meſſiah*, that would bring them temporal glory, had not ſo clear views of the divinity of the promiſed *Meſſiah*, nor the ſpiritual nature of his kingdom, as the Old Teſtament pointed out: Yet, from the known characters of the *Meſſiah*, in theſe oracles; and the ſpecial application of the term *Son* to him, when they find our LORD aſſuming thoſe to himſelf, whoſe appearance was ſo unlike the *Meſſiah* they expected, might charge him with blaſphemy through the violence of their prejudice. To be *the Son of God* by way of eminence, was to be the *Meſſiah*, and *vice verſa* in the *Jews* ſenſe. "Thou art the *Son of God*; thou art the *King of Iſrael*. Art thou the *Chriſt*,

Chriſt, or *Meſſiah*, the *Son of the bleſſed?* Thou ſhalt call his name *Jeſus*,—and he ſhall be called the Son of the higheſt." This, one would think, is more evidently the ſenſe of the *Jews*, in their diſpute with our LORD, than that they drew a logical inference from the nature and quality of *generation*, conſidered abſolutely in GOD.

THE 3d and 4th verſes of *Paul*'s introduction to his epiſtle to the *Romans*, is another paſſage that has been tortured by all the art of criticiſm, to make it prove natural ſonſhip. It is ſcarcely credible, what different terms of interpretation the words have got to make them anſwer that purpoſe; whereas if the ſcope be attended to, it is both plain in itſelf, and evidently points forth another meaning than is commonly put upon it. The whole paragraph reads thus: "*Paul*, a ſervant of *Jeſus Chriſt*, called to be an Apoſtle, ſeparated unto the goſpel of GOD, (which he had promiſed afore by his Prophets in the holy ſcriptures) concerning his Son *Jeſus Chriſt* our LORD, who was made of the ſeed of *David*, according to the fleſh, and declared (determined) to be the Son of GOD with power, according to (by) the Spirit of holineſs, (and) by the reſurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and Apoſtleſhip, for (to the) obedience to (of) the faith among all nations for his name: Among whom are ye alſo the called of *Jeſus Chriſt*."

IN this introduction, the Apoſtle calls himſelf a *ſervant* of *Jeſus Chriſt*; and to invite the ſaints at *Rome* to give proper attention to what he was about to write to them, he points forth in ſeveral diſtinct particulars, the truth and importance of his maſter's character,

character, and concludes with their particular intereſt therein. He proves and illuſtrates the authenticity of the goſpel he was appointed to preach concerning *Jeſus Chriſt*, the *Son of* God, (1) From the authority of God, who had ſent the Prophets under the Old Teſtament, to proclaim by promiſe the advent of his Son. (2) From the accompliſhment of theſe promiſes, in raiſing up *Jeſus* of the ſeed of *David*, according to the fleſh, which was ſo often foretold: And as the great diſpute at that time, was, whether that ſame *Jeſus* was the *Meſſiah*, the *Son of* God and *Saviour*, that God promiſed by the Prophets, he proceeds to put that matter beyond doubt.

First, he ſays, it was *determined by the Spirit of holineſs*. (1) It is manifeſt that an extraordinary meaſure of the Spirit attended him in all the great things he did, which are juſt ſo many atteſtations from God of the truth of his character, as both himſelf and his Apoſtles frequently alledge. (*n*) "For he whom God hath ſent, ſpeaketh the words of God: For God giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him. (*o*) But if I caſt out Devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. (*p*) God *anointed Jeſus* of *Nazareth* with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil: For God was with him. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghoſt, had given commandments unto the Apoſtles whom he had choſen." (2) He was determined to be the Son of God, by that divine effuſion of the Spirit upon the Apoſtles at *Pentecoſt*, which their now aſcended maſter

(*n*) John iii. 34. (*o*) Matt, xii. 28. (*p*) Acts x, 38. and i. 2.

maſter had promiſed to ſend when he went away. This in the moſt eminent manner confirmed the truth of his character as the Sent of GOD; becauſe it had been promiſed by GOD in the Old Teſtament, and expected by the *Jews* as a part of the glory of the *Meſſiah*'s kingdom. *Peter* tells the aſtoniſhed ſpectators, that what they ſaw and heard was the ſame that *Joel* foretold. *Jeſus* himſelf commanded his diſciples to tarry at *Jeruſalem*, until they were endowed with the Spirit: And the event happening ſo ſoon after his aſcenſion, in ſo ſtriking and viſible a manner, muſt be the cleareſt demonſtration of his being the ſent and choſen of GOD: Or, as the Apoſtle hath it in the text, it "determined him to be the SON OF GOD with power." See more of this, Part 2. ſect. 5.

SECONDLY, another proof which he ſays determines him to be the SON OF GOD, is his *reſurrection from the dead*. The Old Teſtament Prophets had ſaid a great deal about the glory and perſpicuity of the kingdom and reign of the *Meſſiah*, who was to be the ſeed of *David*;—*Chriſt* himſelf frequently affirmed that he would riſe from the dead.—(*q*) "The ſon of man ſhall be betrayed to the chief Prieſts,—and they ſhall condemn him to death,—and the third day he ſhall riſe again." Yea, when the *Jews* tempted him to give a proof of his being the *Meſſiah*, he puts the whole upon his *reſurrection*, ſaying, (*r*) "deſtroy this temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up: But he ſpake of the temple of his body." Now, as the whole was without diſpute exactly accompliſhed, it amounts to the cleareſt evidence of his being the true *Meſſiah*, that can poſſibly be ſuppoſed. The Apoſtle

(*q*) Matt. xx. 18, 19. (*r*) John ii. 19, 21. Matt. xii. 38,—41.

Apoſtle ſaw the great importance of it, when he puts the truth of the whole chriſtian religion upon it. (s) "If *Chriſt* be not riſen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is alſo vain." And here he ſays, by this he was "*determined to be the Son of* GOD."

THIRDLY, as a further demonſtration of the power and precious effects of this truth, that he is the Son of GOD, he had beſtowed the grace of Apoſtleſhip upon *Paul*, and others, that they might ſpread the goſpel among the nations, to bring many into the obedience of faith in his name; among which converts, the ſaints at *Rome*, to whom he wrote the epiſtle, were living inſtances of the power of the truth; as he ſays, "*Among whom are ye alſo the called of Jeſus Chriſt.*"

AS the above is the plain ſcope of this paſſage, it muſt be a clear demonſtration that the ſonſhip of *Chriſt* refers to the oeconomy of redemption, as the execution of that plan in its ſeveral parts, are here brought to prove the truth of his *ſonſhip*, otherwiſe the reaſoning of the Apoſtle appears very trifling. For what analogy can be ſuppoſed betwixt the proofs here alledged by *Paul*, and a *natural ſonſhip*, or *Chriſt* being *a Son, as he is God?* What relation have his riſing from the dead,—ſending the Holy Ghoſt,—giving commiſſion to Apoſtles,—and converting the *Gentile* nations, to his *being eternally begotten as a perſon in Deity*? This notion, tho' it were true, could have no manner of relation to any part of redemption, without ſuppoſing it neceſſary in the nature of GOD to redeem mankind: But as this is abſurd, it follows,

(s) 1 Cor. xv. 14.

that this text is a manifeſt proof of *Chriſt*'s *oeconomical ſonſhip*, and can have no relation to a *natural ſonſhip*, or *eternal generation*, for which it hath been ſo often alledged as a proof.

THERE is another text in this epiſtle frequently preſſed into the ſame ſervice.— *t*) "He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things." Here we are told, that the word *proper* ſhould be added to *Son*, which they affirm is the ſame with *natural Son*. It would be needleſs to expoſe the weakneſs of this way of reaſoning, ſince it is ſo evident in the text itſelf, that the ſonſhip ſuppoſed, muſt be taken in a ſenſe conſiſtent with what is predicated of the Son, which is that great work he was given by GOD to finiſh, for the redemption of his people; this limits the ſenſe to an oeconomical ſonſhip. But his being *given*,—*delivered up by God*,—his *ſufferings* and *death* for his people, are ideas not very conſiſtent with *pure Deity*.

WHERE the *Lord Jeſus* is called the *image of* GOD, it is imagined the character belongs to him as a divine perſon, and conſequently favours the doctrine of natural ſonſhip; but I muſt be allowed to differ from this opinion. The phraſe is but thrice uſed in our tranſlation, (*u*) "*Chriſt*, who is the *image of* GOD—Who is the *image* of the *inviſible* GOD, the firſt born of every creature.—The brighneſs of glory, and the expreſs *image* of his perſon." (*Hypoſtaſis*.)

NOW, the *Lord Jeſus* cannot be the *image of* GOD, either in his divine nature, or *divine perſonality*.

(*t*) Rom. viii. 32. (*u*) 2 Cor. iv. 4. Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3.

ality. ‡ Not the firſt, for the ſelf-ſame numerical nature or eſſence, is one and the ſame in all the divine perſons, and ſo he would be as much the *image* of *himſelf*, as of the *Father*: And is there any propriety in ſaying a thing is the *image of itſelf?* It amounts to no more in the preſent caſe, than ſaying the *divine nature* is the *image* of the *divine nature.*

AND according to the ſcheme itſelf, the *divine perſonality* of the Son, cannot be the *image* of the *Father's perſonality*; for it maintains *Chriſt* to be a divine perſon, as he is a SON; which, if true, makes it impoſſible that *as ſuch*, he can be the *image* of the FATHER; for *filiation* is by no means an *image* of *paternity.* Nay, *ſonſhip* is the very reverſe or contrary to *fatherhood*; and it is not to be imagined, how contrary characters can be the *image* or reſemblance of each other. Beſides, his ſonſhip or divine perſonality is ſaid to be communicated by, or derived from the Father; now, it is a contradiction in terms, to ſay that a *communicated* or *derived* manner of ſubſiſtence, is the *image* or reſemblance of an *underived, unoriginated* manner of ſubſiſtence. This the Father's muſt be, as he is of *none:* That the Son's muſt be, as he is *of the Father*, as to his divine perſon, if the human ſcheme be true.

BUT again, the text ſays, *Chriſt* is the image of the *inviſible* GOD, which term muſt include the three in Deity,—all that is called GOD. Now, as the perſons in Deity, and the divine eſſence in each perſon,

‡ The reader will ſee, I hope, the neceſſity I am under to uſe the language of the human ſcheme in this third part, tho' I do not otherwiſe approve of many of the terms ſo applied.

perſon, muſt be *alike inviſible*; he who is the image of the *inviſible God*, cannot be ſo abſtractedly, but as he manifeſts, exhibits, repreſents, or makes known the *inviſible God* to men; this is none other than the LORD JESUS in his complex character as EMMANUEL, GOD in our nature, as I ſhewed above.

AS for the phraſe *eſſential image*, ſo frequent in ſyſtems, it is void of meaning,—there is no countenance in ſcripture for it; and among men there can be no rational ideas affixed to it. Therefore to talk of an *eſſential image*, muſt be as good ſenſe as to tell us of *ſubſtantial forms*, another unmeaning phraſe uſed in treating this ſubject, both are abſurd in *Ontology*, or the doctrine of the properties of being in the abſtract. It ſeems very ſtrange, that the abſtruſe, ſelf-contradictory, and unintelligible phraſes among mankind, ſhould be choſen to clothe divine myſteries, (or rather to make myſteries of plain truths) and the people commanded to believe them under that dreſs, as articles of faith, at the peril of their ſouls! Does the adopting ſuch phraſes into ſchemes of divinity make them good ſenſe? Or, muſt the people's faith be ſo implicit as to receive for truth what their leaders are pleaſed to dictate; tho' they can neither reconcile their notions with ſcripture, reaſon, nor good ſenſe? But to return:

CHRIST, as he is GOD, cannot be the *image of* GOD: Becauſe the image is different from, and inferior to the original: But the LORD JESUS, neither in his divine nature, nor divine perſon, is different from, nor inferior to the Father. He hath the ſame divine nature, and in his perſon he is equal in all divine

divine glory and perfection.—Moreover, to ſay *Chriſt*, as a divine perſon, is the *image of* GOD, is too low a character of him as GOD, when it is conſidered, that every man is called the *image of* GOD. There is no way of making this opinion conſiſtent with any ideas we can have, but by ſuppoſing *two* GODS, the one the *image* and repreſentation of the other, and inferior to him, which is the ſum of the *Arian* hypotheſis.

THE reader will remember that I ſhewed, at p. 172, in what reſpects *Chriſt* may be called the *image of* GOD, agreeable to his oeconomical, ſubordinate character, and no ways inconſiſtent with his divine glory and perfections. To which I ſhall here add, that he is the image of GOD as he reveals, makes known, or repreſents GOD, to men, "Who (the Apoſtle ſays) dwelleth in light, which no man can approach into, whom no man hath ſeen, or can ſee." This he doth as Emmanuel, the medium or mirror of all we know or enjoy of GOD. It is very plainly expreſſed in Col. i. 13.—"That GOD's dear Son (Son of his love, *marg.*) is the image of the inviſible GOD." The ſame into whoſe kingdom the ſaints are tranſlated,—with whom they are fellow heirs,—in whom they have redemption through his blood,—who is the head of the body, the church, the firſt-born from the dead,—in whom all fulneſs dwells,—and who made peace through the blood of his croſs. HE, ſays the Apoſtle "is the image of the inviſible GOD." But to reaſon that he is the image of GOD, as a SON, and as a SON he is GOD, is to deſtroy this part of his character altogether, and ſay, "as GOD he is the *image of* GOD," that is, either GOD is the image of himſelf,—or, one GOD is

is the image of another—or in the moſt favourable acceptation, one in Deity is viſible, another is inviſible.

We now come to the firſt chaper of the *Hebrews*, where it is ſaid of the Son, that he is "Heir of all things—the brightneſs of glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon,—that he made the worlds, and upholds all things,—that he was made ſo much better than the Angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they—Angels are commanded to worſhip him,—and he is called God: Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." All theſe expreſſions are ſuppoſed proofs of natural ſonſhip, or that *Jeſus Chriſt* is God, as he is a Son. It is argued that the things ſaid of the Son, are proper only to God; therefore he is God, as he is a Son. But it is evident by a little conſideration, that this concluſion has no countenance, either from the ſcope of the Epiſtle in general,—this firſt chapter in particular,—or the ſeveral particulars here attributed to the *Son*; all which I ſhall conſider very conciſely.

The Apoſtle wrote this epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, who had embraced chriſtianity; yet were ſo far prejudiced in favour of *Moſaic* rites and ceremonies, as to think them neceſſary to be joined to the goſpel of *Chriſt*. On account of their profeſſing chriſtianity, they ſuffered a kind of perſecution from their gainſaying brethren, which, with their own prejudices, were ready to weaken their attachment to, and endanger their apoſtatizing from the profeſſion of the chriſtian religion. To prevent this, and remove their prejudices, the Apoſtle introduces a variety of arguments to prove the chriſtian diſpenſation to be tranſcendently more excellent

excellent than that under the Old Teſtament. He gives them a glorious deſcription of *Chriſt* in his complex character as EMMANUEL,—in his *offices* as the great *Legiſlator* and *Adminiſtrator* of the oeconomy of GOD in creation, providence, and redemption; and particularly in his offices of *Prophet*, *Prieſt*, and *King*. He proves at large that *Chriſt* was greater than *Angels*:—A greater lawgiver than *Moſes*:—A greater Prieſt than *Aaron*:—A greater prince than *Melchiſedec*. He points out to them the fatal conſequences of Apoſtacy, the bleſſings of perſeverance in the faith, and concludes the whole with a pathetic exhortation to ſteadfaſtneſs.

IN this firſt chapter he proſecutes a part of this great plan, and mentions ſeveral things concerning *Chriſt*, who is the great ſubject of the epiſtle, which infer moſt evidently that he is truly and properly GOD, as well as man: But as the Apoſtle's ſcope is to ſhew the excellency of EMMANUEL above *Angels*, *Moſes*, &c. the whole of his reaſoning muſt be viewed as deſcriptive of him in that character, *as God manifeſt in fleſh*, with a connotation of his offices, and the term *Son of God*, muſt be limited to that ſenſe, conſiſtent with the ſcope of the epiſtle.

SHOULD it be aſked, what is the Apoſtle's ſcope in this firſt chapter? The anſwer is briefly given in the contents of our *Engliſh* common Bibles, "CHRIST *preferred to Angels*." *Chriſt*, the *Son of God*, is the ſubject, the whole is a deſcription of him. But if he is ſpoken of as *God* under the title *Son*, then the whole is a deſcription of Deity abſolutely conſidered. Now can any one ever

ever imagine, that the Apoſtle would write two whole chapters to prove that the *eternal God* was greater than *Angels*, and a third to prove that he was greater than *Moſes*? What occaſion was there for it? Who ever denied that GOD was ſuperior to all thoſe the *Son of God* is contraſted with in this epiſtle? The queſtion with the unconverted *Hebrews* was not about what GOD was; but who *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was? Whom they ſuppoſed only a *mere man*, and none of the beſt neither; not the promiſed *Meſſiah*, but an impoſtor: And if we will not grant that the Apoſtle is here vindicating the character of the *Meſſiah* from the falſe charges of the *Jews*, but will confine the term *Son* to his *Deity*, we plainly affirm, that he took all this pains to prove what no body denied, and what had not the leaſt relation to his purpoſe; except we abſurdly ſuppoſe, that he deſigned to inculcate the notion of TWO GODS.

WE ſhall now more particularly conſider the phraſes uſed here by the Apoſtle, which have been commonly ſo rendered and interpreted, as to make his meaning included in them quite obſcure; and like the dark ſide of the cloud which was turned towards the Egyptians, the character of *Chriſt* given from them, has been rather *confounding* than *edifying*. They have been generally forced in as proofs of his *eternal generation*, whereas if they are carefully conſidered, they will be found to prove a very different doctrine: For our ideas are confined to the character of *Chriſt* as Emmanuel, concerned in the work of our ſalvation, from the conſideration of theſe very expreſſions being applied to him, which have been ſo inadvertently perverted to other purpoſes.

IN

In verſes 1ſt, and 2d, the Apoſtle tells the *Hebrews*, that "God who ſpake in times paſt to their fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken by his Son, *whom he hath appointed heir of all things.*"—It was ſurely Jesus Christ, *as come in the fleſh*, who is here ſaid to ſpeak to them, who could not be *appointed heir purely as* God, for it was God who appointed him as *his* Son; and *delegation* muſt imply inferiority; for tho' the perſon appointed or delegated, may be in other reſpects equal to him or any of them who ſend, impower, or communicate authority to him; yet, in that particular reſpect in which he is *appointed*, *authorized*, *ſent*, or *deputed*, he is certainly inferior. Therefore the Son being *appointed* as heir, muſt refer to that part of his character in which he is *inferior*, and *ſubject* to the *paternal* authority of God, diſplayed in the divine oeconomy, and evidently implied in the act of *appointing or communicating* the power, right, or privilege of heirſhip. Hence, *Chriſt* himſelf ſays, "My *father* who *gave* them me, is *greater* than all." But this I ſhall conſider a little further, when we come to the 4th verſe.

And before we enter upon the 3d, I muſt obſerve, that there are many who with regard to receiving ſentiments in religion, act with more indifference than they would do in purchaſing the meaneſt trifles in the world. In the latter caſe, they chuſe to go if poſſible to the firſt hand, and careful to have their goods pure and unſophiſticated, without adulteration; but they are far from being ſo circumſpect with regard to religion, which they can receive adulterated with the inventions of men,—admit the meaning of paſſages from interpolations and comments, which rather ſhew the ſentiments of the

tranſlator or interpreter, than the mind of God revealed in them. Thus the ſcriptures are forced to ſpeak the language of ſyſtematics. Among many paſſages that have ſuffered by ſuch methods, this text is a moſt glaring example, which commonly runs thus when cited, "Who is the brightneſs of *his father's* glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon."—And according to this reading, has been ſuſtained an undoubted proof of eternal generation; or *Chriſt* being a *Son*, as he is *God*. But if the reader will pleaſe to take his Bible, he will ſee that the words *father* and *his*, are not even in the Engliſh verſion. The tranſlators have ſupplied the word *his*, and cuſtom only has added *father* to it, which is a groſs corruption of the text, and tends to obſcure the obvious meaning of it.

THE firſt clauſe reads thus, "Who being the brightneſs, ſplendor, or refulgence of that glory." The *glory* here refers to the *divers manners* in which GOD ſpake to the fathers at ſundry times, mentioned in the firſt verſe: And the plain eaſy meaning is, that the SON, by whom GOD had ſpoken in the laſt days, was the brightneſs or reſplendence of all the glory exhibited, promiſed, or propheſied of in the Old Teſtament diſpenſation. The glory that was then revealed, was but like the dawn of the morning in compariſon of the noon-day ſplendor of the ſun of righteouſneſs: Such morning rays only announced the approach of the refulgent ſun, who ſpread abroad the glorious light of divine truth through the world, in the moſt open, clear, and conſpicuous manner. *Jeſus Chriſt* was the ſpirit and ſubſtance of all the glory manifeſted in the declarations, appearances, tabernacle, temple, prieſt-hood, and pompous ſervices. They all center in him whoſe character and work is the meridian

dian luſtre, the excelling glory of what was more darkly ſaid and ſhadowed of him under the Old Teſtament. The glorious appearances which were made, the glory of the tabernacle, temple, and prieſt-hood, and eſpecially that glory which appeared from off the mercy-ſeat, (to which this phraſe in the text may perhaps particularly allude) was externally ſtriking to the ſenſes, and often ſurprized the beholders: But not to be compared with that permanent, ſpiritual, and divine glory, which ſhone ſo conſpicuouſly in the whole character of JESUS CHRIST.

THO' the latter *Jewiſh* temple wanted many things that tended to enhance the glory of the firſt, as we are told by *Haggai*.—(*v*) "Who is among you that ſaw this houſe in her *firſt glory?* and how do ye ſee it *now?* Is it not in your eyes in *compariſon of it as nothing?* Notwithſtanding this preference with reſpect to *external glory*, and ſeveral valuable privileges ſuited to that diſpenſation, which were wanting in the latter temple; the ſame Prophet tells us,—(*w*) "I will ſhake all nations, and the deſire of all nations ſhall come, and I will fill this houſe with *glory*, ſaith the LORD of hoſts. The *glory* of this latter houſe *ſhall be greater* than the former, ſaith the LORD of hoſts." The preſence of GOD manifeſted in fleſh, did more than make up all defects in the latter temple, and made it exceedingly excel the former in glory: Yea, with reſpect to all the glory of the *Jewiſh* oeconomy, the Apoſtle ſays,—(*x*) "That which was made glorious, had no glory in this reſpect, by reaſon of the *glory that excelleth*. For if that which was done

(*v*) Hag. ii. 3. (*w*) ver. 7, 9. (*x*) 2 Cor. iii. 10, 11.

done away was glorious, *much more that which remaineth.*"—The life of *Chriſt* here, was a moſt glorious exhibition of the moral perfections of *God*,—his death an amazing declaration of the love, mercy, and condeſcenſion of *God*,—his reſurrection the cleareſt diſplay of the omnipotent power and unerring faithfulneſs of *God*,—his exaltation at *God*'s right hand,—kingly dignity, univerſal dominion and government, and giving ſuch holy and divine laws and ordinances for the perpetual order, comfort, and eſtabliſhment of his church, make up ſuch a refulgence of glory, as made *Iſaiah*, under a prophetic view thereof, cry out to the church with admiration,—(*y*) "Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the *glory* of JEHOVAH is riſen upon thee.—JEHOVAH ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his *glory* ſhall be ſeen upon thee.—Rejoice ye with *Jeruſalem*, and be glad with her, all ye that love her, rejoice for joy with her,—and be delighted with the *abundance of her glory*." Not the boaſted glory of *Sharon*, *Carmel*, and *Lebanon*, which the *Jews* delighted ſo much in; But the quinteſſence and excellence of *all glory*. "The glory of JEHOVAH, the excellency of ELOHIM." HE, who is the medium or mirror of all the divine *perfections*,—who exhibits all the glorious *relations* which JEHOVAH ſtands in to his church. Hence, ſays *John*,—(*z*) "The WORD was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his *glory*, the *glory* as of the only begotten of the father) full of grace and truth." *Paul* tells us, (*a*) "In him dwelleth all the fulneſs of Deity bodily." Therefore he ſays here with the utmoſt propriety, "WHO IS THE BRIGHTNESS OR REFULGENCE OF GLORY."

THE

(*y*) Iſa. lx. 1, 2. ibid. lxvi. 10, 11. (*z*) John i. 14. (*a*) Col. ii. 9.

THE next clauſe in this verſe is rendered, "The expreſs image of his perſon." The ordinary ſenſe impoſed upon theſe words ſo tranſlated is, "That *Chriſt* as a *Son*, is the *eſſential image* of the *father's perſon*." The inconſiſtency of this ſentiment I conſidered above.

I SHALL here ſhew that neither ſuch words nor ideas are in the text. The *Greek* word χαρακτὴρ *character*, which is not that I know of in the New Teſtament, except in this verſe, ſignifies literally a *diſtinguiſhing mark*: And ὑποστασις is a word compounded of *hypo*, *under*, and *ſtaſis*, a *ſtation*, and ſo literally ſignifies an *under ſtation*, or *foundation*: And according to the uſe of it in this place, may be juſtly expreſſed by the Engliſh word *condeſcenſion*. So the text will read, "*Who is the brightneſs or ſplendor of glory, and the diſtinguiſhing mark of his condeſcenſion.*" This can have no relation to *perſon* at all. The word *hypoſtaſis*, here tranſlated *perſon*, is other four times in the New Teſtament, in three of which, it is rendered *confidence*, and in the other *ſubſtance*; neither of theſe can have any relation to *perſon*; nor is any of them the proper meaning of the word. But what makes it pretty evident that *foundation* would be a better tranſlation of it is, that this word agrees better with the ſcope of the Apoſtle, in every place where it is uſed, than any other word it is rendered by. As for example, (*b*) "Faith is the *firm foundation* of things not ſeen, &c." In the other three texts, (*c*) it is *confidence*, but *foundation* would read much better, as the reader may ſee by conſulting the paſſages.

WHATEVER way eccleſiaſtical writers may render this word, there is no claſſical author that makes

(*b*) Heb. xi. 1. (*c*) 2 Cor. ix. 4 and xi. 17. Heb. iii. 14.

makes uſe of it to ſignify *perſon*. Revelation would have appeared more clear, if Divines had taken words in their neareſt ſignification; and not borrowed for them a remote ſenſe, that they might be eaſier adapted to ſyſtems compoſed by themſelves or others, as the meaning of Revelation. In this inſtance, it is plain the text is wreſted to favour ſome ſuch purpoſe, whereas the obvious meaning of it is agreeable to the ſcope of Revelation in general, a glorious diſplay of the character of *Chriſt* our Saviour, and conveys the ſtrongeſt idea of the great love and condeſcenſion of GOD, expreſſed in *Chriſt* coming to ſave ſinners. This is here ſet forth as a moſt intereſting part of his character. That he who was heir of all things,—by whom the worlds were made,—who upholds all things,—who was the brightneſs of glory, ſhould humble himſelf to that *low ſtation* he was in here, ſubmit to a ſhameful and ignominious death for *ſinners*, out of voluntary and matchleſs condeſcenſion! And that this is the idea included in the phraſe, is evident from what immediately follows, which is another branch of his character as the Saviour of men: "When he had by himſelf purged our ſins, ſat down on the right hand of the majeſty on high."

IN this view of the paſſage, the ideas are connected, and quite agreeable to the ſcope of the Apoſtle, in preſenting to the *Hebrews* a deſcription of the Son of GOD, as the ſubſtance and ſplendor of all that diſpenſation, in which they gloried ſo much,—his coming to ſave ſinners, the *moſt diſtinguiſhed mark of divine condeſcenſion*: And having finiſhed his humiliation work, was advanced at GOD's right hand, "being made (as in the 4th verſe) ſo much better than the Angels, as he had

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IN

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* I hope the impartial reader is fully convinced of the propriety of theſe obſervations, and that we have now attained to a clear and determined ſenſe of this paſſage, which hath been not a little excruciating to interpreters. The embarraſſment they have been under, was owing to their departure from the ſenſe of ſcripture terms, which are clearly diſcovered, and impoſing a meaning upon them to favour doctrines, which could not otherwiſe find any countenance in ſcripture: And in this inſtance, as well as ſome others, which we have had occaſion to notice before, it is eaſy to ſee, how far they have departed from the plain ſenſe of the terms: And alſo how eaſily the inattentive may be miſled by traditions and ſyſtems. When once words acquire a meaning, which the writer did not intend they ſhould convey, it is nothing ſtrange, if the paſſages where ſuch words occur, appear dark and perplexed. In ſuch caſes, the reader generally brings ideas to the paſſages, which the writer was a ſtranger to, and no wonder, if they are then intricate, and perhaps contradictory to him. There have been many complaints about the darkneſs of ſcripture, which the readers have occaſioned to themſelves, by ſtriving to reconcile them to their own pre-conceived notions, which never were in the ſcriptures; but learned from ſyſtems compoſed by men, who ſeem to have paid more regard to the traditions of their fathers as a rule, than the ſpirit and ſcope of the ſcriptures. The veil that has been upon many paſſages for centuries paſt, is a moſt glaring proof of this lamentable fact: And, 'tis no way ſurpriſing, that the veil of error hath ſo long remained over texts, which have been once miſconſtrued in favour of doctrines invented by men: For the falſe interpretation being once received,—error ſubſtituted and eſtabliſhed for truth, it is afterwards taken for granted, and continues a received doctrine without examination. Hence tranſubſtantiation, purgatory, &c. continue among Papiſts, and other ſiſter myſteries in the reformed churches,—gloſſed over by interpreters, and inculcated

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In the 4th verſe, the Apoſtle tells us, that "he was made much better than the Angels, as he hath *by inheritance obtained* a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, *I will* be to him a father, and he *ſhall* be to me a Son." It is here ſaid, that he OBTAINED the name SON OF GOD by *inheritance*, which is directly contrary to an *eternal ſonſhip, by an act of generation.* Were he naturally, and eternally a *Son*, it could not be ſaid with any propriety that he *obtained* this name by inheritance; but this the Apoſtle ſays he did, while others in effect ſay, he did not, but it was natural to him as he is GOD. The inquiring chriſtian may determine for himſelf, which of theſe ſentiments he ſhould hold for truth; both he cannot, as they are directly oppoſite.

It is manifeſt on the face of the text, that by his *obtaining* this excellent *name* by inheritance, he was *made ſo much better than Angels.* Now, this muſt be ſomething *not eternal*, for then it were not *obtained*, nor he made thereby better than Angels, who were not in being.—And how ridiculous is it to ſuppoſe, that GOD *obtained* a name *by inheritance, to make him better than Angels?* which is the plain language of the Apoſtle, if it is true, that CHRIST

eated as neceſſary truths by leaders in religion, they have been ſwallowed for ages with very little ceremony, and held equally ſacred with the abuſed texts, which they are ſuppoſed to be taken from.

But when this, or any other text, is reſcued from the perplexed, incoherent ideas commonly prefixed to it; and preſented to the reader in that ſimplicity and plainneſs ſo peculiar to the ſcriptures, clearly connected with the writer's ſcope, and the character of *Chriſt* in revelation, it muſt ſtamp a value on the diſcovery to all who love the truths of GOD, exhibited in their own original beauty and divine purity.

CHRIST is a *Son*, as he is GOD. But it is evident from this text, that his ſonſhip belongs to his oeconomical character, in which the Apoſtle is treating of him here, and with the utmoſt propriety ſays, "*He was made ſo much better than the Angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*"

IT ſhould here be remarked, that what the ſcriptures ſay concerning *Chriſt* as an *Heir*, or *Firſt-born*, which are terms of the ſame import when applied to him, moſtly refer to ſome part of his exalted character after his death. This is pretty clear from the Apoſtle's reaſoning, in this chapter. "GOD,—hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken by his *Son*, whom he *hath appointed heir of all things*,—who is the brightneſs of glory, and the diſtinguiſhing mark of his condeſcenſion, when he had by himſelf purged our ſins, ſat down on the right-hand of the majeſty on high: Being made ſo much better than Angels, *as he hath by inheritance obtained* a more excellent name than they.—Thou haſt loved righteouſneſs, and hated iniquity; therefore GOD, thy GOD *hath anointed* thee with the oil of gladneſs *above thy fellows*." He told his diſciples after his reſurrection, "That all power in heaven and earth was given unto him," which was the accompliſhment of the promiſe made concerning him in the Pſalms,—(e) "Alſo I will make him my firſt-born, higher than the kings of the earth." †

(e) Pſa. lxxxix. 27.

† The tranſlators have thought fit to ſupply the word *my* in this text, but it evidently mars the ſenſe, as it makes it contain only one promiſe,—and ſuppoſes the *firſt-born* to be the perſon concerning whom this promiſe is given, of being "made higher than the kings of the earth." Whereas it is plain that the text, without this ſupplement, includes two promiſes; the one, "I will make him

The next verſe of this chapter I had occaſion to conſider before, and ſhall not detain the reader any longer on a ſubject ſo clear:

BUT come to another text in this epiſtle, which is made an argument for eternal ſonſhip,—(*f*) "The law maketh men high prieſts which have infirmities; but the word of the oath which was ſince the law, maketh the SON, who is conſecrated (or as in the margin, *perfected*) for evermore." From this text they reaſon, "that as thoſe who "had infirmity were MEN before they were Prieſts; "ſo *Chriſt* was a SON before his inveſtiture in the "prieſtly office; conſequently his ſonſhip did not "ariſe from his prieſthood."

Anſ.

(*f*) Heb. vii. 28.

him *firſt-born*; the other explanatory of the former: I will make him ſuch a *firſt-born*, as to be higher than the kings of the earth. This is clear from the ſcope of the whole paſſage, beginning at the 20th verſe, where we have the deſignation of *Chriſt* to his work of mediator, which is followed by ſeveral promiſes of aid and ſupport, in going through the arduous work of humiliation, with the faith and confidence he ſhould expreſs in GOD, as his father, and the rock of his ſalvation; then follow ſeveral promiſes that reſpect his exaltation, "*Alſo*, ſaith GOD, will I make *him firſt-born*." What him? The phraſeology points it out as another promiſe made to the ſame perſon mentioned before: And this primogeniture was to be of ſuch a ſort, as to admit of no equal. He ſhould be heir to an inheritance of ſuch glory, extent, and duration, as every way to excel the kings of the earth. Hence, it is ſaid, "I will ſet him on high, becauſe he hath made my name known." To the ſame purpoſe are the other texts, where he is called *firſt-born*, "*Jeſus Chriſt* the *firſt begotten* of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.—He is the head of the body, the church: Who is the beginning, the *firſt-born* from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." Now, if this primogenial right conferred on *Jeſus Chriſt*, refers to his exaltation after he had finiſhed the work of man's redemption, as revelation plainly declares it does, how can it have any relation to a *natural* and *neceſſary primogeniture*, or to his being a *Son*, as he is *God*? This by no means deſtroys the idea of priority included in that text, "He is the firſt-born of every creature." The ideas are very diſtinct: The one refers

Anſ. THE argument here is merely ſpecious, it may amuſe the unwary, but has no relation to the point it is brought to prove. For the queſtion is not, whether he was a *Son* before he actually entered upon the office of prieſthood? But whether his divine perſon was eternally begotten, and ſo an *eternal Son*? I not only grant, but hold it as a principle, that the conſideration of his ſonſhip, as *Emmanuel*, was neceſſary in order of nature (to ſpeak as men) before even his ordination to his office as mediator, ‡ much more his actual inveſtiture in the office of prieſthood; which is more than can be drawn from the text: But what does even this ſay for *eternal generation*, which the text is brought to prove? The moſt that can be alledged from it is, that he was a *Son* before his inveſtiture in that office, by the word of the oath, which was *ſince the law*, this might be even after his incarnation. As to what the Pſalmiſt ſays of his prieſt-

fers to his early exiſtence: The other to his being put in poſſeſſion of the power and privileges of GOD's firſt-born, after he had finiſhed the work the father gave him to do.

There is a moſt emphatical idea of the *extent* of the *Meſſiah*'s kingly power and government, expreſſed in an ancient prophecy by *Baalam*. Num. xxiv. 17. "I ſhall ſee him, but not now; I ſhall behold him, but not nigh: There ſhall proceed a ſtar out of *Jacob*, and a ſceptre ſhall riſe out of *Iſrael*, and ſhall ſmite the corners of *Moab*, and *deſtroy all the children of Seth*." *Seth* was the ſon of *Adam*, whom GOD gave him, inſtead of *Abel*, whom *Cain* ſlew. As all *Cain*'s poſterity was deſtroyed by the flood, it was the race of *Seth* only, that was ſaved in the Ark. Therefore the whole world is now the children of *Seth*. The idea then, that is conveyed by the laſt clauſe of the verſe, as we have it tranſlated, is, that the *Meſſiah ſhould deſtroy the whole world of mankind*! But it reads, he ſhall UNWALL, or have *uninterrupted dominion* and power over all the children of *Seth*, which reſpects his univerſal rule and government over the whole world, and is agreeable to many other propheſies and and promiſes concerning him. Pſa. lxxii. 8. "He ſhall have dominion from ſea to ſea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. Pſa. ii. 8. Aſk of me, and I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion." All which refer to that exalted ſtate of government he was raiſed to, after his ſufferings here, and reſurrection from the dead.

‡ See p. 183.

prieſthood, it may be to point out his excellency above figurative prieſts; and exhibit his character that he might be known when manifeſted in fleſh, as the end and ſubſtance of *Melchizedecian* and *Aaronical* prieſthoods: And tho' ſpoken in the preſent tenſe, yet refers to things future: But will as natively prove *Melchizedec* to be an *eternal man*, as that *Chriſt* was *eternally begotten*.

THE text ſays, the Son was *conſecrated* to be a Prieſt; but will any ſay his pure Deity could be conſecrated or perfected? Or that he could be our Prieſt, without the conſideration of his human nature, which muſt be included in every idea of his appointment to, or undertaking and aſſumption of this office of prieſthood. So that inſtead of the text proving *eternal generation*, (like all the reſt, as I hope the reader plainly ſees) it is an evident proof of his being a SON, in his complex character as the glorious EMMANUEL.

THERE yet remain two texts, which are not only reckoned proofs of *Chriſt's* natural ſonſhip, but are ſuppoſed ſufficient to prove the terms *Father*, *Son*, *Word*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, natural, neceſſary, and eſſential in Deity. One is our LORD's command to his Apoſtles,—(*y*) "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptiſing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt." From which it is argued in favour of *Chriſt* being a Son, as he is GOD, "That as baptiſm is a ſolemn "act of divine worſhip, it muſt be adminiſtered in "the name of a divine perſon, therefore Son "in the text muſt expreſs his divine nature. "Whereas if the term Son refers to one, as he is "mediator,

(*y*) Matt. xxviii. 19.

" mediator, then we are baptiſed in the name of " two divine perſons in their higheſt titles; and in " the name of the other, in his lower and inferior " title and character."

Anſ. THIS reaſoning is extremely weak, for it takes for granted that the terms Father and Holy Ghoſt, are titles that expreſs the divine nature of two perſons; but theſe I have ſhewed to be oeconomical, conſequently the argument is without any foundation, and can conclude nothing in favour of natural ſonſhip: And I think by conſidering the ſubject a little, it will appear a fair evidence of the names Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt being oeconomical. As this was the way our LORD commanded his Apoſtles to initiate the *Gentile* nations into the chriſtian religion, in or *into* the name of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, theſe names muſt have a ſpecial relation to the religion they were to take on the badge of, or the uſe of them would be inſignificant in that ordinance, eſpecially to heathens, who had no notion of *three* conſiſtent with the unity of Deity, nor the religion *they* under theſe characters were diſplayed in.

TO ſay they were baptiſed into the belief of a Trinity abſtractedly conſidered, is ſaying they were baptiſed into what neither they nor the Apoſtles knew any thing about, ſeeing there is no ſuch revelation in Deity. Beſides, this would not have been baptiſing into the chriſtian religion; as it is moſt certain, that abſolute Deity is equally related to *Jewiſh* and *chriſtian* religion, that is, has no manner of relation to either. The knowledge we have of GOD, is in what he hath revealed; faith in GOD is founded upon that knowledge we attain from revelation, which is a diſplay of his perfections

tions in creation, providence, and redemption; in the laſt of which, he hath made himſelf known as three diſtinct agents, under the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, each repreſented as having peculiar work in that divine tranſaction. So that the whole of redemption is contained in the *work* of the Father, the *work* of the Son, and the *work* of the Holy Ghoſt; conſequently being baptiſed into their names, is profeſſing to believe the whole of the chriſtian religion, which theſe names are ſo neceſſarily connected with in every part, as to be the ſum of the whole, and in ſuch manner, as every chriſtian may ſay, take theſe names from my religion, and what have I more?

THE other text is,—(z) "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt: And theſe three are one." As I have proved the terms Father, Word, and Holy Ghoſt, to be oeconomically applied to GOD, it might here ſuffice; for if it is a truth, there is no text in revelation that will contradict it. But leſt the friends of the other opinion ſhould imagine they are left in full poſſeſſion of this text, I ſhall very briefly ſhew how little it is to their purpoſe.

HERE again I meet with the philoſophical gentleman formerly mentioned, who deduces ſeveral arguments from this text, to prove his beloved tenet *eternal generation*: and as he reduces his reaſoning into the form of ſyllogiſms, I ſhall lay them before the reader, who may judge how much they are to his purpoſe.

"THE Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, "are

(z) 1 John v. 7.

" are the three ſubjects ſpoken of in the text, 1 John " v. 7.—But the three ſubjects ſpoken of in the text, " are ſpoken of as perſons in God-head.—*Ergo*, " The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, are " ſpoken of in the text, as perſons in the God- " head: That is, one as a divine perſon is called " the Father, another as a divine perſon is called " the Word, and a third as a divine perſon is cal- " led the Holy Ghoſt."

" THE ſubjects or divine perſons ſpoken of in " the text, 1 John v. 7. are ſpoken of *as they are*.— " But the ſubjects or divine perſons ſpoken of in " the text, are the Father, Word, and Holy Ghoſt. " —*Ergo*, the ſubjects or divine perſons ſpoken of " in the text, are ſpoken of *as they are* the Father, " the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt."

HERE, reader, is a brace of ſyllogiſms for you. —Carefully view the two great pillars on which a fundamental article of religion ſtands,—ſo abſolutely neceſſary in this gentleman's account, that to deny it, he ſays, is to " make faith vain,—ſal- " vation void,—a chimera,—all chriſtianity a mere " phantom,—to ſap the foundation of all chriſtian " religion, and enervate the hope of eternal hap- " pineſs."

BUT one would think as the whole of religion depends upon this article, it would be ſo clearly revealed in the word of GOD, that every one, the clown as well as the philoſopher, might know and underſtand it. Is it then mentioned in expreſs words? No. Can it be found by comparing texts together? No, not without forced interpretations. Is there any other revelation than the Bible, to certify us of its truth and importance? No, without

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we take the dictates of men for a revelation. What evidence then is it attended with to merit our credit; and how ſhall we come by that evidence? We muſt become Logicians, and learn to reaſon metaphyſically: Conſequently the beſt Logicians are the beſt chriſtians: Or, it is Logic that makes the chriſtian. This cardinal point muſt then (as I dare ſay it does) remain unintelligible to the generality of mankind, ſince it requires a train of ſyllogiſtical reaſoning to bring the evidence on which it reſts to their view: Or they muſt (which is a much ſhorter way) believe it upon the authority of the learned; but ſtill this will not be their faith, but the Logician's: And if they pretend to judge for themſelves, they lie open to impoſition, as 19 of 20 among profeſſed chriſtians do not know the difference betwixt a well formed ſyllogiſm upon rules of ratiocination, and a ſophiſm artfully compoſed; ſo that they are ſtill at the mercy of the *Rabbies*.

How miſerably has religion been tortured by learned contenders for the *faith delivered to ſyſtematics*, who have muſtered great numbers of ſyllogiſms *pro & con*, adorned with all the trappings of mood and figure; and by all appearance, rather contending who ſhould appear the moſt acute reaſoner or beſt Logician, than who ſhould moſt elucidate the truth, which has been left buried under the rubbiſh of ſcholaſtic ſubtilties? What advantage has religion received from all the dialectical ſubtilties of *Tho. Aquinas*, *Duns Scotus*, and other modern critics, who have attempted to reduce it to a ſyſtem of ſcholaſtic niceties, fitter to be the ſport of ſchool-boys, than the ſtudy of ſober minds? Thanks be to God that all neceſſary truths in religion are clearly revealed in his own word. On this

this all our hopes and comfort depend. The evidence ariſing from ſuch abſtruſe reaſoning in favour of religion, which not one in a hundred knows any thing about, will give the immortal ſoul very little ſatisfaction, upon a ſerious conſideration in view of death and judgement.

As I write not for the *Literati*, but to further the inſtruction of ſuch as can and do read their *Bible*, and chuſe *it* for their guide, it would be entirely beſide my plan, to enter into a courſe of intricate reaſoning; I only beg their leave to ſtep aſide for a moment to ſpeak with this gentleman in his own ſtile.

Sir, your ſyllogiſms cannot be admitted as fair arguments to prove the point you maintain. The firſt, you found upon there being *three* ſubjects in the text, whereas according to your own method of reaſoning there are *four*. A Logical ſubject is that of which ſomething is predicated. Now *Unity* is as capable of predication as *Trinity*: For it is as true that the *unity* in the text is *three*, as that the *three* are *one*. Now, as there are four ſubjects in the text, your ſyllogiſm, Sir, ſhould have run thus, "The Father, the Word, the Holy Ghoſt, and the Unity, are the four ſubjects ſpoken of in the text, 1 John v. 7. But the four ſubjects ſpoken of in the text, are ſpoken of as perſons in the God-head.—*Ergo*, the Father, the Word, the Holy Ghoſt, and the Unity, are ſpoken of as perſons in the God-head"—Theſe premiſes are full as good as the former, and conſequently the concluſion. This makes void your argument in its firſt form.

BUT ſhould both your major and minor be denied, the concluſion muſt fall of courſe. The major, upon the authority of the text itſelf, which ſays, "Theſe three are one." So that there is but one ſubject in the text. The minor, I have ſhewed to be falſe, by proving at large from ſcripture evidence, that the terms Father, Word, and Holy Ghoſt, are oeconomically applied to the divine three, and ſo are not natural and eſſential to them as perſons in Deity. With equal propriety, Sir, you may draw ſuch concluſions from every text, where any of the covenant characters of the ſacred three are mentioned; but would it not be abſurd to infer from thence, that all the names they bear in ſcripture, are eſſential to their nature as perſons in Deity?

BUT ſeeing this inconveniency, I ſuppoſe, and to avoid it as much as your cauſe would allow, you formed the ſyllogiſm in a different dreſs, in which the weight of the argument depends upon the words *as they are*. But pray, Sir, who denies that the ſacred three are ſpoken of *as they are?* The text ſays they are Father, Word, and Holy Ghoſt, but what is that to *eternal generation*, or *natural* and *eternal proceſſion*, which you were to prove from the text? Therefore, to ſpeak in the dialectical ſtile, your argument, Sir, is *Ignoratio Elenchi*; for it has no connection with the matter in diſpute: And as in both forms of the argument, you chuſe for premiſes what is not granted, and what you have not proved to be true; I may, agreeable to the rules of *Logic*, reject your concluſion, and tell you the argument is only a ſophiſm, commonly called *Petitio Principii*, or what goes by the name of *begging the queſtion*. If better arguments cannot be found to ſup-

ſupport your cauſe, it muſt ſoon be very low in the eſteem of all who impartially ſearch the ſcriptures.

Now, Reader, I dare ſay you are not much wiſer either by this gentleman's ſyllogiſms, or my remarks upon them. Such has been too often the effect of the ſcholaſtic manner of diſputing about religion *from* texts, that is, never coming near them: And that we don't err in the ſame manner, let us return to the text. Interpreters have commonly detached this verſe from the Apoſtle's ſcope, and conſidered it as "a definition of Deity, and the manner how the divine perſons exiſt in the divine nature." If there is any thing of this kind in the text, it muſt be in the laſt clauſe, "theſe three are one," which is a fact divinely atteſted; but how the *one* is *three*, or the *three one*, or how either exiſts can be collected from the words, is far beyond my comprehenſion, and muſt be referred to curious wits, who are fond of knowing what no man can know; and ſubjecting that to a definition, which is infinitely beyond all definition. Poor clods of duſt, that will preſume to define the GOD that made them! Deity is not the ſubject of definition. All definitions limit things, but Deity is unlimited, and cannot come within the laws or limits of definition.

IF the Apoſtle's ſcope is attended to, it will appear evident that he is proving the truth of the character of the *Meſſiah*, and the religion which he eſtabliſhed: Or, as he ſays himſelf, (*a*) "*That Jeſus is the Son of God.*" He produces ſix witneſſes, three of which are in the text, "There are three that

(*a*) ver. 5.

that bear record."—To what? That JESUS was the SON OF GOD, the *Saviour* of the world. Who are the witneſſes? "The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt" The ſame who are mentioned in other texts, as bearing witneſs that JESUS was the true MESSIAH.— *b*) "The Father himſelf, which hath ſent me, hath born witneſs of me." This he did with an audible voice from heaven, both at his baptiſm and transfiguration.—(*c*) "JESUS anſwered,—though I bear witneſs of myſelf, yet my record is true. For this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs to the *truth*.—I am the way, the *truth*, and the life." He bore witneſs to his own character, to *Paul* at his converſion, and to *John* in the iſle of *Patmos*.—(*d*) "And we are his witneſſes, and ſo alſo is the Holy Ghoſt." Who in a conſpicuous manner bore witneſs to his being the *Meſſiah*, the *Son of God*, in his viſible reſting upon him at his baptiſm,—in all the miracles he wrought, which he ſays were done through the power of the Spirit,—and in that plentiful effuſion at *Pentecoſt*, whereby his diſciples were qualified to ſpread his name and doctrine through the world: And *John* tells us in the verſe immediately preceding the text, "It is the Spirit that beareth witneſs."—Thus the three witneſſes bare record, and gave teſtimony to the incarnate *Jeſus*, the SON OF GOD. To the ſame purpoſe are other evidences upon record, The ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament—*John the Baptiſt*—his own divine works,—the water and the blood,—his reſurrection and aſcenſion,—with the evidence of the twelve Apoſtles, all which teſtify the ſame truth that JESUS was the *true Meſſiah*, the *ſent of God*, who came to die and riſe

(*b*) John v. 37. (*c*) ibid. viii. 14. and xviii. 37. (*d*) Acts v. 32.

riſe again, according to the ſcriptures. This was the teſt of diſcipleſhip, as *John* in this paſſage expreſſes it, " Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that JESUS is the SON OF GOD ?"

BUT it is very ſtrange that there is never among all theſe teſtimonies, the leaſt hint concerning this *eſſential* article *eternal generation*, which they would ſcrew out of this and many other texts, contrary to the ſpirit and deſign of the truths conveyed in them !

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CONCLUSION.

NOW, reader, as I am done with theſe texts, and have not to my knowledge overlooked any one that is commonly taken to favour *eternal generation:* So I hope it appears evident, that none of theſe have any relation to it. It is matter of wonder how any conſiderate perſon ſhould lay ſuch weight upon this as an eſſential article of religion, while it hath no countenance at all in revelation: Whereas were it of ſuch conſequence as ſome would have the world believe, it might be expected to be clearly revealed, as all articles of religion neceſſary to ſalvation really are.

FROM the whole, it is abundantly clear, that the appellations or titles ſo frequently given our *Lord* and *Saviour* in revelation, *Word*,—*Son of God*,—*Son of man*,—*Meſſiah*,—*Chriſt Jeſus*,—*Lamb of God*,—*only begotten*,—*firſt-born*,—*Heir*, &c. are ſynonimous in the general idea which they convey of the perſon ſpoken of, all relating to him as *Emmanuel* the *Saviour*: And if any unprejudiced perſon ſhall keep this in his eye in reading the ſcripture, eſpecially the New Teſtament, where they moſt frequently occur, I may venture to promiſe a more eaſy, plain, and ſatisfactory account of the character of *Chriſt*, than he ever ſaw before, when falſely conceiving ſome of theſe terms to have a reſpect to pure Deity, or what is commonly called *eternal generation.*

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THIS matter concerning the character of *Chriſt* being ſet in a fair light, and eſtabliſhed upon ſcripture arguments, takes off the force of many pretences againſt his proper Deity, ariſing from the ſuppoſed derivation of one divine perſon from another in Deity, and a ſuppoſed act of *eternal generation* producing a co-eſſential, eternal ſon; which things are not expreſſed or implied in any part of revelation, and are acknowledged on all ſides to be great and incomprehenſible difficulties.

A GREAT part of what is objected againſt the Deity of *Chriſt*, is founded upon the human definitions of GOD. Some haughty mortals have undertaken to tell what GOD is, and becauſe the complex character which we have of him in ſcripture, does not anſwer their definitions, they cannot apprehend how he can be GOD. By confounding of things they confuſe their own ideas, and loſe the truth. If ſimilitude of attributes argues a ſameneſs of moral rectitude and character, the ſcriptures have fairly determined *Jeſus Chriſt* to be GOD; for there is not any revealed attribute or perfection of GOD, but what is in the plaineſt terms aſcribed to him. But what the phyſical eſſence of GOD is, the Books of revelation have no where declared.

ALL attempts are vain to define the manner of the exiſtence of a ſupreme cauſe. This far in general we may argue with certainty, that a cauſe or being, that has in nature no ſuperior cauſe, and therefore is alſo unproduced, and independent, muſt be ſelf-exiſtent: That is, exiſtence muſt be eſſential to him; or, ſuch is his nature, that he cannot but be. Every being muſt either exiſt *of itſelf*, or not *of itſelf*: That which exiſts not of itſelf,

ſelf, muſt derive its exiſtence from ſome other, and ſo be dependent: But the Being mentioned above is independent, and uncauſed. The root of his exiſtence is no where but in his own nature: To ſuppoſe it any where elſe, is to ſuppoſe a ſuperior cauſe to the ſupreme, which is a contradiction.

SUCH a Being muſt be eternal and infinite. Eternal, becauſe there is no way by which ſuch a being can begin, exiſtence being of his nature. Infinite, becauſe his exiſtence cannot be limited by any other.

SUCH a Being is above all things that come under our cognizance; and therefore the manner of his exiſtence muſt be above all our conceptions. He neceſſarily exiſts. But there is nothing falls within our comprehenſion of that kind. We know of no being, but what we can *imagine it not to be* without any contradiction to nature, but this Supreme Being himſelf. With reſpect to him, we know by reaſoning, that there *muſt be one* Being, who cannot be ſuppoſed *not to be*, as certainly as we know any thing at all: Tho' at the ſame time we cannot know him, and *how he exiſts*. Adequate ideas of eternity and infinity are above us, who are *Finites*. What relation or analogy there is betwixt time, which is a ſucceſſion of moments, and *eternal*, unchangeable exiſtence;—how any being ſhould be no older *now*, than he was five thouſand years ago, &c. are ſpeculations which involve finite minds in inſuperable difficulties.

AS our minds are *finite*, they cannot without a contradiction comprehend what is *infinite*. What tho' they were enlarged to ever ſo great a capacity, yet ſo long as they

they retain their general nature, and continue to be of the ſame *kind*, they would by that be only rendered capable to apprehend *more* and *more finite ideas*; out of which, however increaſed or exalted, no poſitive ideas of the perfection of GOD can ever be framed. In the nature of a perfect infinite being, there can be nothing *finite*, nor any compoſition of *finites*. Tho' we cannot comprehend his eſſence and manner of being; yet we may ſay with certainty, that he is free from all defects.

IT is extremely inconſiſtent for us to talk about how the ſupreme incorporeal Being exiſts, as if we comprehended his nature, while we do not comprehend the nature of the moſt *inferior ſpirits*; nor have any conceptions even of matter itſelf diveſted of its accidents: When we cannot turn ourſelves any way, but we are accoſted with ſomething above our underſtandings, beſides the numberleſs undeſcried regions, with their ſeveral ſtates and circumſtances, which our philoſophy has never yet frequented.—If we cannot penetrate ſo far as to diſcover the nature and effects of *them*, is it to be expected that we ſhould, that we *can*, ſee the myſteries of *his nature*, who is the ſupreme cauſe of all?

WE may and ought in our conceptions of GOD, to remove from him what are defects in ourſelves, as want of life, ignorance, impotence, acting inconſiſtently with truth, and the like; theſe are defects in us, and would be much more ſo in him, therefore cannot in any ſenſe be aſcribed to him. For as ignorance is the ſame in every ſubject, we underſtand what it is, and may literally deny that it belongs to GOD: The like may be ſaid of his power, &c. Tho' we do not underſtand how he

knows things, and his manner of operation. *Thus* we may ſpeak, without pretending to comprehend his nature.

In like manner we may draw concluſions from the conſideration of his works, in the production and government of the world, without pretending to comprehend the manner of his exiſtence. So far from this, that a juſt contemplation of his works, will lead to the neceſſity of acknowledging, that there muſt be an incomprehenſible Being at the head of them: And tho' we do not comprehend the *mode* or manner in which the world depends upon him, and he influences and diſpoſes things, becauſe this enters into the knowledge of his nature, the one cannot be underſtood without the other: Yet when we ſee things, which are not ſelf-exiſtent, and plainly obſerve an oeconomy and deſign in the diſpoſition of them, we may conclude there is *ſome Being*, upon whom their exiſtence depends, and by whom they are modelled and managed.

But great care ſhould be taken in all our behaviour towards God, that we make no falſe repreſentation of him. We muſt take care not to repreſent him by any picture or image, either mental or material, for this is to deny at once his incorporiety, and incomprehenſible nature, &c. So far from this, the language we uſe when we ſpeak of him ought not only to be well choſen, but alſo underſtood in the moſt ſublime ſenſe poſſible: And the ſame care is neceſſary with reſpect to our thoughts. For tho' our terms be the moſt reverent and proper that we can conceive, he is ſtill ſomething above all our conceptions. For as the mode of his exiſtence and eſſential attributes are incom-

incomprehenſible by us, our words and phraſes, and the objects of our faculties, muſt be inadequate expreſſions of them.

As for example, when we ſpeak of his *mercy*, we muſt not by mercy underſtand what is called compaſſion in us, which is attended with a certain uneaſineſs, and therefore cannot be aſcribed to GOD in that ſenſe we aſcribe it to ourſelves, whoſe *affections* are moved by pathetic arts of rhetoric, or tears of importunity; but there can be no alteration ſuppoſed in the Deity, tho' from the weakneſs of our underſtanding, we denominate the perfections of GOD variouſly, as he exerts himſelf on this or that occaſion.

PERHAPS it may be affirmed upon good grounds, that among men there is nothing that reſembles the *mercy* of GOD. So different are the ideas we have of what is called *mercy* among men, as to the objects, extent, cauſes, and manner of ſhewing it, that there is not any example which ſeems to have the leaſt relation to the true idea we ought to have of *God*'s *mercy* revealed in his word. Among *criminals* they are pardoned who appear to be *leaſt guilty*;—in ſhewing mercy, the preference is given on account of ſome circumſtances in the crimes, or in the perſons who commit them. Men ſhew mercy in pardoning ſuch as injure them, when the offender repents, and perhaps muſt crave forgiveneſs. Mercy is ſhewed to the miſerable, from the impreſſions the nature and degree of the miſery hath upon men's feelings, which depends upon the art of repreſenting the caſe, or the diſpoſition the perſons are in to be affected with it.

BUT the *mercy of God* is extended to the chief of ſinners, the *moſt guilty*,—not becauſe they repent, nor on account of any good qualities in them more than others; but the mercy contained in his promiſe, all *ſovereign*, and *free*, being ſhewed them in forgiving their offences, moves them to repentance; Or, rather (to ſpeak more agreeable to the goſpel) is the cauſe of that gracious change in them, and theſe new diſpoſitions to love GOD and hate ſin, which is an effect peculiar to the divine cauſe, the *mercy of God*.—Nor is this mercy ſhewed, becauſe of any feelings their miſery can excite in GOD from any form of repreſentation; (which I doubt we too often imagine); this were to bring GOD on a level with men, whoſe weakneſs and imperfections are the cauſes of their partiality in ſuch caſes.

WHEN we ſpeak of the knowledge of GOD, we muſt not mean, that he knows things *as we do*, that intention or operation of mind muſt produce it,—that he apprehends by impreſſions made upon him,—that he reaſons by the help of ideas,—or that even what we call *intuitive* and immediate knowledge in us, comes up to the mode in which he knows things, as ſome have ſuppoſed; who, not capable to bring the creature up to GOD, have attempted to bring him down to them, rather than be thought not to know what GOD is. The moſt we can ſay is, that there is nothing of which he is, or can be ignorant, and that is all we can ſafely ſay.

THO' men have accuſtomed themſelves to ſpeak of GOD, in terms taken from ſuch things as they in their weakneſs admired, and have incorporated ſuch ideas into their language as *divines*; and tho' conſidering what defects there are in our way of ſpeaking and thinking, we cannot well part with them

them all: Yet we ſhould remember in the uſe of theſe terms, to take them in the moſt exalted ſenſe poſſible, and annex a *mental* qualification to the uſe of ſuch epithets and ways of ſpeaking, as are introduced by cuſtom, antiquity, or by neceſſity, from the narrowneſs of either the *minds* of men or their *language*.

BUT when GOD reveals any thing concerning himſelf, it becomes us creatures to give credit to what he ſays, tho' we cannot comprehend the manner of it. It is eaſy to conceive, that there maybe perfections in the divine nature, which finite creatures cannot comprehend, as to the manner of their exiſtence: And it muſt be the higheſt pitch of arrorance in any creature of the moſt perfect kind, to call in queſtion the truths revealed by GOD concerning himſelf, becauſe he cannot comprehend the manner of them. Does GOD ſay theſe things are ſo? There is no further queſtion as to the certainty of them, however dark they may be as to the manner *how* they are. GOD is the ſupreme truth,—his word alone is the infallible rule, the unerring oracle to guide and inſtruct us in the knowledge of every thing that is ſuitable for us, or poſſible to be known with certainty concerning himſelf. † "*The ſecret things belong unto the* LORD *our* GOD: *But thoſe things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever.*"

† Deut. xxix. 19.

ADDEN-

ADDENDA.

THERE is a particular ſentiment which I have frequently hinted in the foregoing work, being willing the reader ſhould always keep it in view, viz. That the character we have of GOD in revelation is relative, or oeconomical:—That we have no definition of the ſimple or abſtract nature of Deity in all the ſcriptures: And notwithſtanding I differ in this from the *Jewiſh Rabbies*, and *chriſtian critics*, I can ſee no cauſe to retract; as I know no name or deſignation aſcribed to GOD, but what is ſome way or other a characteriſtic appellation of him, under ſome relation to his creatures: Nor can I conceive of what uſe any name or title of GOD could be to them, or what ideas they could have of ſuch name or title that had no relation to them.

BUT I find it neceſſary here to remove an objection to this, which I was not formerly aware of, "That the name JEHOVAH is directly and immediately deſcriptive of the divine eſſence and nature, without any proper relation to us—a *name of eſſence*," as it is called by *Jews* and chriſtian critics. But if it is ſo, this name muſt define his eſſence, which of conſequence muſt be limited; for every definition ſets bounds to the thing defined: But

GOD

GOD cannot be limited, and therefore there can be no definition of his eſſence. As we cannot know his *eſſence*, it is preſumption to enquire after the name of it, which is beyond the capacity of finite intellects. He does but confound himſelf, that preſumes to know more of GOD than he reveals of himſelf; but he has revealed no name that defines his eſſence; ſuch revelation would be of no uſe to creatures, as they could have no underſtanding of ſuch names, conſequently they would be unneceſſary in a religion ſuited to their capacities.

I OWN the name JEHOVAH is peculiar to the divine Being, and is not applicable to any creature; but wherever it is uſed, there is ſomething predicated of the Supreme Being under that name, which has ſome relation in particular to his church and people. Even the ſenſe which both *Jews* and chriſtians imagine is imported in the *letters*, which the word is compoſed of, viz. the *time paſt*, *preſent*, and *future*, have a relation to creatures; for with reſpect to GOD, ſtrictly ſpeaking, theſe terms can have no exiſtence, further than they reſpect his revealed relations to men. With GOD there is no change of times. "He is without variableneſs or ſhadow of turning:" And the *times paſt*, *preſent*, and *future*, are but a poor definition of GOD's *eternal* exiſtence, which they are ſuppoſed to be in this caſe, for none of the terms, nor any meaſure of duration can be applicable to *eternity*.

BUT if theſe terms (if they are pointed out in the name JEHOVAH) are viewed with reſpect to his power, faithfulneſs, mercy, and care, exerciſed about his church,—that in every revolving generation, he is to them *preſent*, what he has been to thoſe

thoſe *paſt*, and will be the ſame to thoſe that *ſhall ſucceed*. This tends to their edification and comfort; and is a conſtant ground of praiſe to JEHOVAH, whoſe mighty acts done for his people, and gracious promiſes upon record, certify them what he *is*, and *will be to them*, JEHOVAH, a ſure dwelling place in all generations.

THAT the name JEHOVAH reſpects his revealed relation to his church, is plain from its being joined in thoſe ſacred inſcriptions, which were deſigned to ſtrengthen the faith, hope, and confidence of his people, as JEHOVAH-JIREH, the LORD will *ſee*, or *provide*;—JEHOVAH-NISI, the LORD is *my Banner*;—JEHOVAH-ROPHI, the LORD *healeth*;—JEHOVAH-SHALLOM, the LORD will *perfect*, or ſend *peace*;—JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, the LORD *is there*; all which have an immediate relation to what he *has been*, *is*, and *will be to his people*.

THE intimation JEHOVAH himſelf gives, why he would be called by that name, is ſufficient to limit our curioſity, and inſtruct us in the uſe and meaning thereof to the church. He had made himſelf known by the name of *God-Almighty* to the ancient *Patriarchs*, making promiſes which ſuſtained their faith in his *Almighty power*, without receiving the thing promiſed: But to their children, he ſays, he would be known by the name JEHOVAH, in efficaciouſly *giving being to*, and *fulfilling* his promiſes made to their fathers: So that they ſhould not only experience his *power*; but alſo his divine *veracity*, *goodneſs*, and *mercy*. Accordingly we find them celebrating the praiſes of JEHOVAH, and attributing their deliverance from the *Egyptians* to him; * "Then ſang *Moſes* and the children of *Iſrael*

* EXO. XV. 1, 2, 3.

Iſrael this ſong unto JEHOVAH,—ſaying, I will ſing unto JEHOVAH.—JEHOVAH is my ſtrength and ſong, and he is become my ſalvation. † —JEHOVAH is a man of war: JEHOVAH is his name."

AND it is very remarkable to this purpoſe, that when he promiſed any ſpecial favour or bleſſing to the church, or threatened any diſtinguiſhing judgment to their enemies on their behalf, which was the ſame as promiſes to them, he gave this as a reaſon, "*That they might know his name to be* JEHOVAH," which expreſſion is very frequent in the Old Teſtament, and certainly ſhews that the name itſelf, has a relation to what he promiſes to do for them; when by the mighty works he would perform on their behalf, they ſhould learn the relation he ſtood in to them as JEHOVAH, their ſaviour, fulfilling his promiſes to them.

IN like manner when he gave them ordinances and laws, he always put them in mind of their obligation to obſerve them, from the conſideration of his name JEHOVAH. Accordingly, when any particular commandment is enjoined them, he commonly adds, "I AM JEHOVAH," or, "I AM JEHOVAH THY GOD." And it is very obſervable, that the ten commandments which were given them with ſo great external ſolemnity, are prefaced with theſe remarkable works, ‡ "I AM JEHOVAH THY ELOHIM, who brought thee out of the land of *Egypt*, out of the houſe of bondage." This expreſſion being ſo often repeated, muſt have been of the greateſt importance to that people, and if rightly underſtood, is full of inſtruction to us.

† In the ſame words *Iſaiah* triumphs in JEHOVAH, who, he ſays, was become his JESUS. See p. 92.

‡ Exo. xx. 2.

At the ſame time, that every repetition thereof put them in mind of the power and prerogative of JEHOVAH, to give out what laws, ſtatutes, and ordinances he pleaſed, and require their obedience and conformity to them in the manner he directed.—It gave them the ſtrongeſt aſſurance of the infallible performance of all the promiſes he had made. It ſecured to them the enjoyment of ſuch bleſſings as he in ſovereignty had added to their dutiful obedience to the laws he had given them,—and was a divine certification, that the comminations he prefixed to the violation of theſe ſtatutes, ſhould be as certainly executed.

WHEN he ſays, "*I am* JEHOVAH *your* GOD," it muſt certainly denote the relation he ſtood in to them; and that he would aid and protect them in the exerciſe of their duty, and amply reward them for it. This was not like *Egyptian* bondage, of making brick without ſtraw; for at the ſame time that he impoſes the duties, he intimates the gracious relation he was come under to them, in names every way ſignificant and expreſſive of that divine aid neceſſary to their right performance of the duties required. Thus, the ſame goſpel was preached to them as to us, in whom the power of divine truth, expreſſed in the names and relations in which GOD in his ſovereign mercy and grace has revealed himſelf to us, is the all-powerful cauſe of that love and conformity we ſhew to the commandments of the LORD *our* GOD.

TRUE believers were then, as well as now, diſtinguiſhed from ſuch as only profeſſed to believe, by the power of truth contained in theſe declarations made by JEHOVAH, of what he was to them, and what he would do for them, included in ſignificant

nificant names, promiſes, propheſies, ſigns, ſacrifices, &c. the ſpirit and intent of which being known and believed by them, was a principle and cauſe of that love and filial obedience they expreſſed for the honour and glory of him, who had conferred ſuch valuable privileges upon them. The truly righteous in all periods, have viewed the duties required of them, in the light of privileges conferred upon them. But the other, who ſaw no further than the *letter*, was void of that knowledge on which belief is founded, conſequently, their obedience was without principle, and had no higher end than *ſelf* under ſome conſideration or other: And the great reaſon is frequently given, "*They knew not the name of* JEHOVAH, *and therefore they did not regard the words of his mouth.—But they that knew his name, put their truſt in him.*"

THIS ſubject is capable of exemplification from a variety of paſſages, but I ſhall only notice one in *Iſaiah*, † where JEHOVAH declares ſeveral things concerning *Chriſt*, the ſaviour, and the great work he ſhould perform, eſpecially the extent of the privileges of the goſpel to the blinded Gentile nations; and to command credit to theſe ſovereign declarations, he ſays, ‡ "*I am* JEHOVAH, *that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.*"—The glory of bringing to paſs theſe great events, which were as certain as to their accompliſhment, as other promiſes made formerly, which were already fulfilled, therefore he adds, "Behold, the former things are come to paſs, and new things do I declare, before they ſpring forth I tell you of them." His glory as JEHOVAH is pledged for the performance; and the Gentile nations are invited to rejoice

† Iſa. xlii. ‡ ver. 8.

joice in JEHOVAH, who had thus engaged himſelf for their ſalvation: And to confirm their hopes, he declares the divine cauſe and method of bringing to paſs the grand event. *"JEHOVAH is pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake, for he *ſhall magnify the law, and make it honourable*," by bringing into being, and actually accompliſhing what JEHOVAH had engaged the honour of his name for.

THE word TORAH here rendered *Law*, might as well be *Doctrine*, *Inſtitution*, or *Diſpoſition*. The word ADAR ſignifies *Illuſtrious*, *Eminent*, *Magnificent*. The verbs, as in many other declarations of *Jehovah*, are in the *Hiphil* conjugation, which is always expreſſive of the *cauſe*,—is the ſame as if he had ſaid, "*I will cauſe to be*;" and with reſpect to his promiſes, points out the abſolute certainty of their accompliſhment. The verſe reads, "JEHOVAH is pleaſed to manifeſt his faithfulneſs: He will cauſe his inſtitutions to be magnified: He will cauſe his law or doctrine to be illuſtrious." JEHOVAH is repreſented as the *efficient cauſe* of the promiſes made reſpecting the ſalvation of men being accompliſhed, which plainly ſhews the connexion betwixt the name, and the ſalvation promiſed.

WHEN Divines ſpeak of *Chriſt* fulfilling the *Law*, it is generally reſtricted to what is called the *moral law*, or ten commandments, which he perfectly obeyed in his life, and is commonly called his *active obedience*. But the *law* here muſt be taken in a larger ſenſe, including what gives inſtruction, as well as what implies obligation, and extends to every thing in the Old Teſtament concerning him, whether *doctrines*, *promiſes*, *propheſies*, *types*, *ſigns*, *ſhadows*,

* Iſa. xlii. 21.

ſhadows, &c. all which are fulfilled with unerring exactneſs in him.—Every circumſtance concerning him in the New Teſtament, (many of which perhaps ſeem very trifling to a carnal conception) was a fulfilling ſomething that referred to him in the Old. Hence it is ſo often ſaid,—"*As it is written—That the Scriptures might be fulfilled.*" In this manner JEHOVAH manifeſted his faithfulneſs, and made his inſtitutions, doctrine, or law, magnificent and illuſtrious, every tittle whereof being fulfilled in JESUS CHRIST: And of ſo great importance was it to the glory of JEHOVAH, that JESUS CHRIST could not diſpenſe with the leaſt circumſtance, without the ſtricteſt conformity and moſt perfect obedience thereto, not only in the *letter*, but the *ſpirit* and *intent* of it: And his mind being capacious enough to inveſtigate the extenſive ſubject in every neceſſary point of view,—the principles of obedience and ſprings of action in him, being commenſurate to the *extent* of the law in its utmoſt latitude, and adequate to the divine *ſpirituality* thereof, gave ſuch worth to his obedience, as when viewed by the impartial eye of JEHOVAH, who ſent him to fulfil all righteouſneſs, the ſentence of approbation is proclaimed from heaven in his favour, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.*"

BUT to make this point ſtill more evident, let it be conſidered, that the name JEHOVAH is given to JESUS CHRIST in the Old Teſtament, joined with the common names of Saviour, Redeemer, &c. which certainly belong to the oeconomy of redemption: And to confirm the faith of the church, it is promiſed, that he ſhould be called by this name, joined with another peculiar to him as our redeemer, and which is declared by JEHOVAH in the

the before cited text, to be the capital ground of his being pleaſed with us.—* "*This is the name whereby he ſhall be called*, JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU, *the Lord our righteouſneſs*." † This refers to the time he ſhould appear in fleſh. Accordingly, as JEHOVAH cannot be rightly pronounced in the *Greek* tongue, it is commonly rendered LORD in the New Teſtament, and by way of ſpeciality given to JESUS CHRIST. ‖ "This day is born unto you a Saviour, who is CHRIST the LORD: Or the LORD CHRIST. The word which GOD ſent to the children of *Iſrael*, preaching peace by *Jeſus Chriſt*, he is LORD of all. To this end *Chriſt* both died and roſe, that he might be LORD both of the dead and living: And he hath on his veſture, and on his thigh, a name written, *King of Kings*, and LORD *of* LORDS."

THE attentive reader will mind that it was proved at large, part I. ſect. 5th. That what is ſaid of JEHOVAH in the Old Teſtament, is applied to JESUS CHRIST in the New: To which I ſhall only

* Jer. xxiii. 6.

† We have a ſtrange tranſlation of a ſimilar text, Jer. xxxiii. 16. "In thoſe days ſhall *Judah* be ſaved, and *Jeruſalem* ſhall dwell ſafely: And this is the name whereby ſhe ſhall be called, the LORD our righteouſneſs." Not to expoſe the glaring incongruity of the terms, "SHE ſhall be called the LORD," the ſentiment conveyed by them deſtroys the foundation of our acceptance with GOD, by attributing that to the church, which is the peculiar prerogative of *Chriſt* our Redeemer, who is "made unto us *righteouſneſs*,—who brought in an *everlaſting righteouſneſs*,—with which JEHOVAH is ſaid to be well pleaſed."—The idea in the text, as it is tranſlated, ſuits that church well in which there is a ſtock of merit ſuppoſed to be lodged, which may be purchaſed on conditions, to recommend her members to the favour of GOD: But the ſcriptures know no ſuch church. The glory of being our righteouſneſs, is every where given to *Chriſt*, and ſo does this text, which ſhould read thus,—"And he who ſhall call her, or, he ſhall be called by her JEHOVAH, *our righteouſneſs*," which is the ſame with the other text, and agreeable to the ſcope of revelation.

‖ Luke ii. 11. Acts x. 36. Rom. xiv. 9. Rev xix. 16.

only add one idea here. It was JEHOVAH that guided and governed the *Jewiſh* church under the Old Teſtament,—that exerciſed his divine paternal care about her in ſuch variety of compaſſionate and tender expreſſions, and indulgent methods, declaring his concern for their frequent contempt of duty and privilege,—raiſing up Prophets in every age, who came in the name of JEHOVAH to teſtify againſt their defections, warn them of their danger, and endeavour to reclaim them: But all this JESUS CHRIST declares HE had done, when he ſat down on the mount over againſt *Jeruſalem*; and with the ſame ſympathetic tenderneſs, he had often before lamented their impending fate, (which now muſt take place, the meaſure of their wickedneſs being filled up in ſhedding his innocent blood, which crowned the guilt of killing the Prophets he had from time to time ſent unto them, which blood ſhould be required of that generation;) he ſays, † "O *Jeruſalem*, *Jeruſalem*, thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them who were ſent unto you, *how often would I have* gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your houſe is left unto you deſolate, &c."

DIVINE wiſdom is conſpicuous in giving the relative name LORD, which JEHOVAH is rendered by, to JESUS CHRIST in the New Teſtament, WHEN, he *really gave being* to his promiſes he had made under the Old Teſtament; this being the very reaſon for which, as he told *Moſes*, he would make himſelf known by the name JEHOVAH;—and WHEN, he performed thoſe great works he had promiſed in behalf of his people, by which they ſhould know his name to be JEHOVAH. He *now* appears as the ſpirit and deſign of all the ſacred inſcrip-

† Matt. xxiii. 37.

inſcriptions to which JEHOVAH is joined, which are juſt ſo many parts of the character of *Chriſt*,—the ſum of all the mercy and truth promiſed to the fathers by JEHOVAH.* And in his inſtructions to the churches, he aſſumes the ſame title under the name LORD, which he did under the name JEHOVAH.‡ "I am *Alpha and Omega*, the *beginning* and the *end*, ſaith the LORD, *who is*, and *who was*, and *who is to come*, *the Almighty*."

AND agreeable to his inferior character as a Son, the Saviour, and Redeemer of men, the name LORD is joined with others, expreſſive of the ſalvation he in ſo great condeſcenſion came to procure. Hence he is called the LORD JESUS CHRIST,—JESUS *the* LORD,—CHRIST *the* LORD,—SAVIOUR *the* LORD,—SPIRIT *the* LORD. And this phraſeology is not confined to the New Teſtament, for *Iſaiah* expreſſes this connexion in very plain terms.§ "I will truſt, and not be afraid; for the LORD JEHOVAH is my ſtrength and ſong; he alſo is become my ſalvation." JESUS, as in the original.

AND

* *Eve* ſeems to have thought that JEHOVAH, who proclaimed the glad tidings of ſalvation by the ſeed of the woman, ſhould be that ſeed himſelf: Or, that he who was the promiſed ſeed might be called JEHOVAH. For, ſhe ſuppoſing that her firſt child was the ſeed promiſed, ſaid with exultation,—"I have gotten the MAN, the JEHOVAH," as Gen iv. 1. reads. Tho' ſhe was miſtaken in thinking that *Cain*, her firſt-born, was the promiſed ſeed; yet ſhe cannot be ſuppoſed to have miſunderſtood the promiſe itſelf ſo far, as to apply the name JEHOVAH to the ſeed promiſed, if it had no relation to it. She ſeems to have rather underſtood this divine connexion better than many ſince, notwithſtanding their having the whole of revelation to learn it from, which ſhews plainly, that he who made this and all other promiſes reſpecting the ſalvation of of men, under the character of JEHOVAH, was the efficient himſelf,—and in the fulneſs of time appeared in infinite condeſcenſion as the *ſon of man*,—the promiſed ſeed of the woman, compleatly fulfilling every thing that pointed at him in that humble character and related to that ſalvation which he as JEHOVAH had promiſed to the church.

‡ Com. Rev. i. 8. iv. 8. xi. 17. with Iſa. xli. 4. xliv. 6. xlviii. 12. See p. 96.

§ Iſa. xii. 2. See p. 92.

AND according to every notion and acceptation of the word, he bears the name LORD in the moſt proper ſenſe poſſible, whether we conſider the appellations which imply or expreſs LORDSHIP, or the right and foundation thereof. With regard to the firſt, he is called King, Prince, Maſter, Captain, Ruler, Lawgiver, Leader, &c. And with reſpect to the other,—if uncontroulable power and ability to govern, be a ground of LORDSHIP, he moſt juſtly claims the title LORD in the higheſt reſpect: And alſo, as he created, preſerves, upholds, maintains, and provides for all. If conqueſt gives any title to dominion, he has every right this way.—If purchaſe or primogeniture gives a right to rule and government among men, how much more is it due to CHRIST? He planned and erected the church, inſtituted laws and ordinances for her government,—guards her from all enemies,—brings members into her by his power,—he is the LORD, head, huſband, ſupreme teacher, director, governor, and ſource of endleſs happineſs to all her members.

THIS is a ſubject too copious and extenſive to be properly diſcuſſed in a ſhort excurſion of this kind; yet from theſe few ſhort hints, it is plain, that the name JEHOVAH in the Old Teſtament, and the name which anſwers to it in the New, are deſigned to inſtruct us in the knowledge of ſome relation he that bears them ſtands in to his church: And as I have ſhewed above, that the other names aſſumed by the divine Being, refer to the great oecomony he is carrying on with reſpect to his church; we may ſafely conclude, that there is no abſtract name or definition of the Supreme Being in revelation: And conſequently that all the fine ſpeculations on that head, are without foundation in ſcripture.

By the TABLE *here subjoined, I doubt not but I shall oblige many of my readers, especially such as have their minds formed to relish the beauty of divine truth, so plainly revealed in the sacred records. Besides the great number of texts barely cited, the following either differ from our common translation, and is marked * : Or, are more or less explained, and marked †. If the same text is some way illustrated, and differently translated, it is marked § ‡.*

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ERRATA.

Beſides a very few literal errors of no great moment, the reader will pleaſe to correct the following :—P. 29, l. 4, from the bottom, put *a* before *more*.—P. 56. for Gen. ii. 2. r. Gen. i. 2—P. 103, l. 6, dele *and*.—P. 142, l. 16, dele *the*, before ſon of man.—P. 155. l. 5, for *Aſtoples* r. *Apoſtles*.—P. 161. l. 16, for the period after elect, ſubſtitute a comma.—P. 174. l. 22, for *know*, r. *knows*.—P. 247, l. 10, for *have they*, r. *they have*.——P. 261. l. 15. for *ſufficient*, r. *inſufficient*.—P. 279, l. 15, put *applied* after generation.—P. 297, l. 21, for *is*, r. *has*.—P. 310, l. 42, for *terms*, r. *turns*.——The firſt ſentence of the laſt paragraph in p. 256, read interrogatively, "Is it truth, that the divine three exiſt *naturally*, *neceſſarily*, and *eternally*?"

FINIS